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Gift Guide
MUSIC, GIFTS & GADGETS

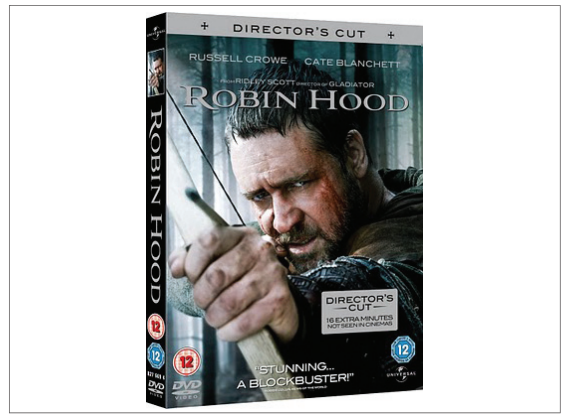
WONROWE VISION – *MISSION INVINCIBLE*
Wonrowe Vision is a Classic Street Rock Band with a strong Evangelistic Christian Message. In the vein of Rez Band, Altar Boys & Hawk Nelson with a Heavy Punk Edge. The Band's debut, *Mission Invincible*, is a must have for fans of True Jesus Rock! CD comes with a Free Bonus DVD. Steve Rowe – Mortification – Bass Guitar & Vocals; Lincoln Bowen – Ex Mortification – Guitar; Andrew Esnouf – Drums. Available online from roweproductions.com through the soundmass.com store. Record Company & Management – silverbulletrecords.com

ADOPTION SAVES LIVES
I AM A HUMAN BEING. I BELIEVE THAT OTHER HUMAN BEINGS, NO MATTER WHAT AGE, DESERVE THE RIGHT TO LIVE, TO LOVE, TO BE LOVED, TO BE HAPPY, TO BE SAFE, TO EXPERIENCE EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE, BOTH BEFORE & AFTER BIRTH.
I AM PRO-LIFE

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR ADOPTION!
Wear the pro-life message by sporting one of these fine shirts or hoodies from Rock For Life. Go to RockForLifeStore.com and enter "HMMAG" for a special discount on these shirts and everything else in the store! These items make excellent Christmas gifts! All proceeds go to promoting human rights for all people by engaging the culture through music, education and action. To join go to RockForLife.org.

HT 7450 ZERO GRAVITY MASSAGE CHAIR
Human Touch makes a complete line of massage chairs (you know, those things you plunk down on for long periods of time at Brookstone shops in the mall until someone stares holes into you) and this one is at the top. With a user-friendly remote control, it's easy to explore and learn what the different programming options are. This one is billed as a "zero gravity," because it reclines almost into a full horizontal posture. The handy remote allows you to add heat and experiment with rapid or slow percussion, kneading and compression. A cool Acupoint® Detection system pinpoints trigger points to key in on during the massage. At times a program will stall, as if the unit is over-worked. Nevertheless, this chair has been cherished and appreciated during our deadline this issue. [humantouch.com]

[Setup Ease: A- | Performance: B | Price: $3,999]



ROBIN HOOD
Epic, historical (though the accuracy could be questioned) and highly entertaining, this 2-Disc Unrated Director's Cut is a pleasure to watch. Then, with the directional oversight of Ridley Scott, this should come as no surprise. Russell Crowe was superbly cast for this medieval tale put to film. They managed to balance equal parts battle action with human drama (redemption, betrayal and corruption). The extra bonus disc is loaded with fun deleted scenes and entertaining documentaries on bringing this legend to life.

SPIRITUAL RELEVANCY (%)	70
OBSCENITIES	2
SCENES OF GORE	6
NUDITY / SEXUALITY	2

Gift Guide

MUSIC, GIFTS & GADGETS

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One satisfied customer recently said: *"I received my merch and they ROCK! One very satisfied (if aging) metalhead. Thanks so much!"*—Dave C.

HAIL THE BLESSED HOUR
Hail the Blessed Hour will be ringing in the new year with their sophomore label release "Anastasis." Hailing from Tulsa, Oklahoma, Hail the Blessed Hour delivers a brutal and diverse array of Christ-centered metal. Visit our online store at ragingstormrecords.com and use the code HTBHGIFT to receive a 10% discount AND early shipping on the new album.

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"Clothe yourselves with the Lord." Romans 13:14

WWW.NOUSTORE.COM
"Forgiven" by Eric Samuel Timm XLVII-V-XVII "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"

The word "Forgiven" really cuts to my heart strings. What I love about forgiveness is that is connects the common threads of humanity. What I mean by that is our pains and pasts are very much alike, the details is what makes them unique to us. I wanted to paint a piece that captures this commonality we all share and the solution I pray we would all find. I wanted to connect us together, but offering room for each of us to add our story.

For more information on Eric Samuel Timm or to have him speak/paint at your event check out nooneunderground.com

ASHLYNN
"After The Clouds, The Sun" is the wintery, swirling debut EP from Ashlynn, a 4-piece indie band based out of Dallas, Texas. Their sound seems to be the musical embodiment of a baby that would be conceived from the likes of Thrice, As Cities Burn, and Lydia. Unique instrumental and vocal arrangements mixed with the conceptual lyrical journey of discontentment to understanding makes "After The Clouds, The Sun" worth a listen, given you are a citizen of good taste.

NEWS FROM VERONA
Gripping vocals, shredding lyrics, and a shear level of optimism is what defines News from Verona. News From Verona is able to combine the smarts of Paramore with the boldness of The Classic Crime all while crafting a tightly produced, hook-laden rock album (*All I Know Is I Know Nothing*) appealing to a multi-cultured demographic.

Look for their big tour with ManicDrive in January and February.

"Really catchy hooks that are easy to begin singing along to. Nice piano accompaniment with the smooth vocals."
—HM Magazine

newsfromverona.com

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HEARTS IN STEREO
Besides a great icon in the two hearts, this Canadian quintet cranks out some melodic pop punk with a good penchant for a vocal hook. They pull off a real funny parody of Justin Bieber's "Somebody to Love" in a video on their MySpace.

myspace.com/heartsinstereo

Gift Guide

MUSIC, GIFTS & GADGETS

MIKE FARRIS AND THE CUMBERLAND SAINTS
The Night The Cumberland Came Alive is the first of Farris' Rose Memorial Fund projects, which is an ongoing charitable outreach in memory of his long-time manager and friend, Rose McGathy. Farris rolls out a decidedly pre-war Americana sound, while delivering a hopeful message of restoration.

"The net result is one class act, Mike Farris, soulfully supporting a very good cause."
—Dan MacIntosh, HM Magazine

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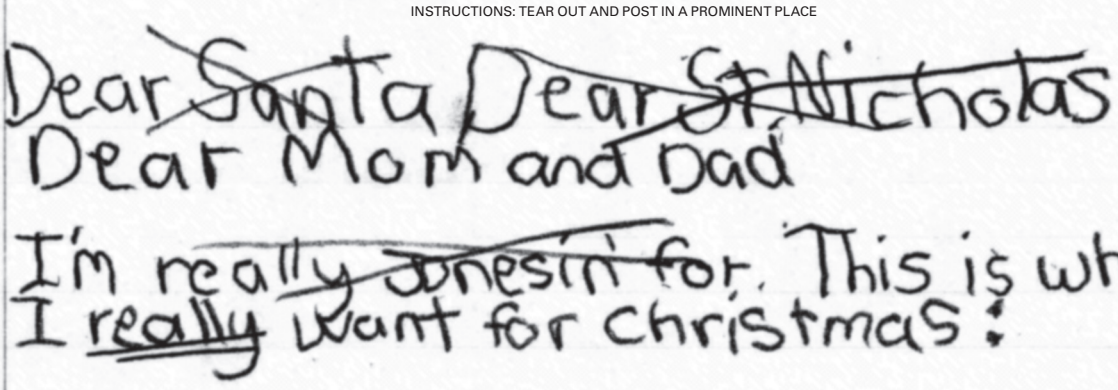
www.mendmark.com

PHILMONT
The follow up to Philmont's critically acclaimed ATTENTION (August 2009), The Transition EP delivers 6 tracks of high-energy, melodic pop sound with singable choruses like on debut single "You Will Remain," currently vying for adds at Christian Hit Radio. Lyrically, the project ventures a bit more in-depth than previous Philmont efforts, touching on themes that include God's divine nature, the case for creation and value of human life. Available on iTunes and on Philmont's online merch store.

www.Philmont.BigCartel.com

INSTRUCTIONS: TEAR OUT AND POST IN A PROMINENT PLACE



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ROCK FOR LIFE | *PRO LIFE* | *rockforlife.org*

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NO ONE UNDERGROUND | *SPEAKER, PAINTER, PERFORMER* | *nooneunderground.com*

ASHLYNN | *AFTER THE CLOUDS, THE SUN* | *myspace.com/weareashlynn, facebook.com/weareashlynn*

HEARTS IN STEREO | *A TALE OF TWO WORLDS* | *myspace.com/heartsinstereo*

NEWS FROM VERONA | *ALL I KNOW IS I KNOW NOTHING* | *newsfromverona.com*

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MIKE FARRIS & THE CUMBERLAND SAINTS | *THE NIGHT THE CUMBERLAND CAME ALIVE* | *eonemusic.com*

PROJECT DAMAGE CONTROL | *MECHANISM* | *projectdamagecontrol.com*

MEND MARK | *THE MARK OF LOVE* | *mendmark.com*

PHILMONT | *THE TRANSITION EP* | *Philmont.BigCartel.com*

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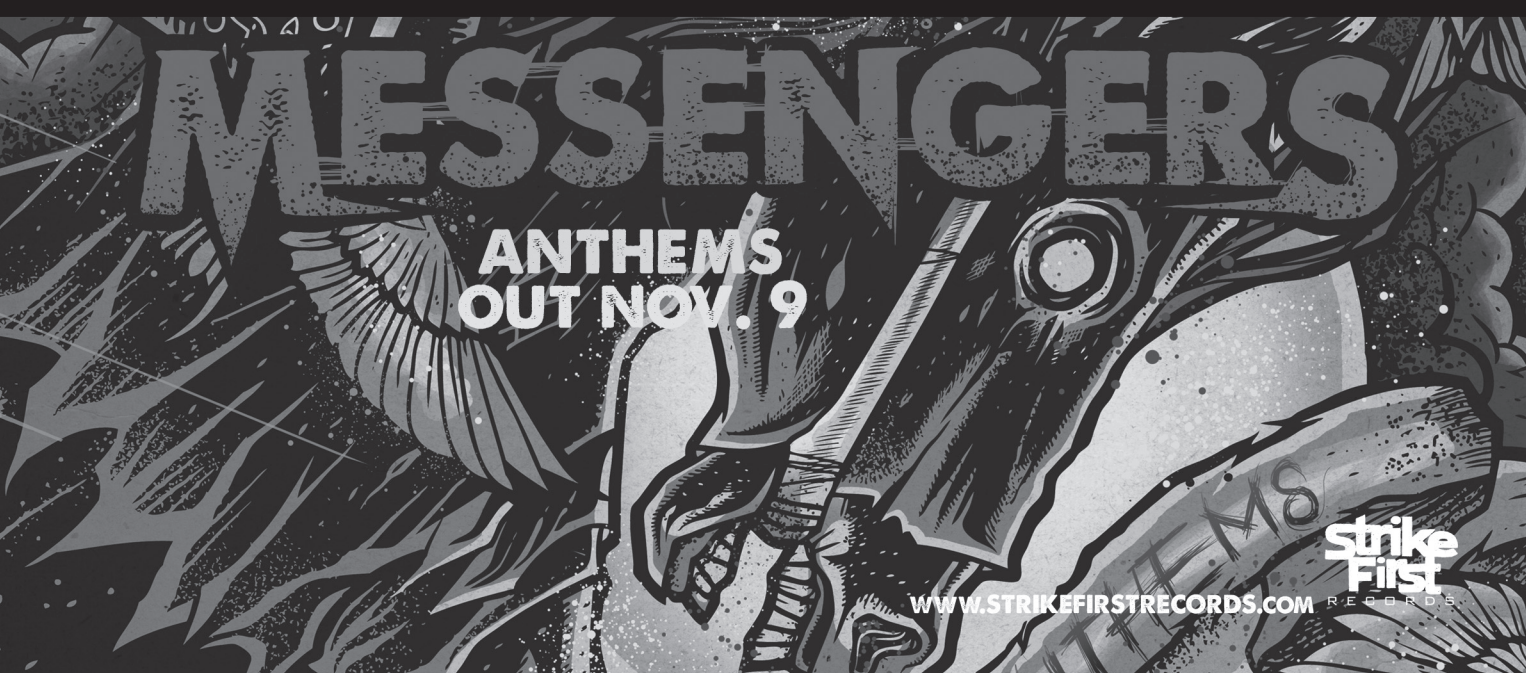
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From the editor

Doug Van Pelt

ARE YOU CONFUSED?

Don't be – at least in that sick, negative sense. With this double-wide cover shot of Underoath we went left-of-center again with our design. I love how it's almost symbolic of the band being shrouded by mystery and questions regarding its recent personnel change (from Aaron to Daniel on the drumset). If you were following our kickstarter campaign in regards to there being six collector's covers for this issue, well ... that came up short. We're doing other fun things to ensure HM's survival in print, like the cellphone recycling effort (see ad on page 56). And speaking of ads, you may have noticed that not all products advertised in HM reflect the same standard as those things covered in the editorial content. See more about that in my blog.

The HM Magazine iPhone app finally rolled out. Search for it at iTunes with "Hard Music Magazine" and you'll find it. This brings me to a good point I wanted to bring up. Sometimes people can use directions on how to benefit from the news and information, etc, from HM Mag. Besides reading the magazine in your hands, consider taking these actions as well:

a) sign up for the **emailing list**. Once a week you'll get an email with 12+ news items. It's free.
b) subscribe to the **HM Magazine Podcast**. It's free.
c) visit **hmmag.com**, where you'll find news posted pretty much daily, as well as "Hard Music Exclusive" articles, interviews and behind-the-scenes videos and other content.
d) read the digital/**online edition** of HM Magazine. If you subscribe to the print, you are also entitled to a digital subscription as part of your print sub.
e) follow us on twitter (**twitter.com/HM_mag**) and you'll get fresh news in 140-character spurts (perfect for your cellphone, hint, hint).
f) add us as friends on facebook (**facebook.com/HM.Magazine**) and you'll get to interact with thousands of other music-loving friends, commenting on HM events as they happen.
g) sign up for our **text message service** (send an email to news@hmmag.com with your cell # and phone service carrier, AT&T, Verizon, etc). Every once in awhile (but rarely and only as deemed "important") we'll send a short text with hot, breaking Christian hard music news. It's free; but, of course, your text rates may apply.
h) add the free Mozilla Firefox browser to your computer and download the free HM Magazine "boom" (it's a custom **HM Magazine internet browser** with buttons for the RSS news feed, a video playlist, podcasts ... and it looks really cool there with the HM logo on it).
i) consider joining the HM street team to help HM further its mission. For more information on being involved, go to **hmmag.com/street-team** or email streetteam@hmmag.com

And one last thing: VOTE in the Readers' Poll! (http://tiny.cc/HMvote)

SPINNING AT HM NOW

BEN + VESPER	*Honors*	Always enjoy this couple's light fare.
WANDA JACKSON	*The Party Ain't Over*	Jack White produced. Incl: "Dust on the Bible."
VARIOUS ARTISTS	*We Wish You a Metal Xmas*	Re-released w/Alice Cooper, Pinnick, Doro.
VARIOUS ARTISTS	*'Tis the Season to be Gotee*	Relient K, HoH, Abandon KS singing Christmas.
VARIOUS ARTISTS	*Bethlehem Skyline 2*	See a pattern here? Getting in the moood early.
VARIOUS ARTISTS	*The Essential Christmas*	Mellower. Chill Christmas tunes (Third Day, Jars...)
TIMES OF GRACE	*The Hymn of a Broken Man*	Oh, yeah! Screaming, brilliant metal.

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Letters to the Editor

HM

STICKERS AS BIG AS TEXAS

Love the new HM stickers ... Now I just have to wash my windows, so I can show them off!
–Lyle McDonald, via facebook

Ed – Glad you like the new stickers. It's nice when a spontaneous idea turns out well. Hope you like our new Hard Music Magazine shirts with the goat sporting an iPod (listening to the HM Magazine Podcast, of course).

ONE FOR ME AND ONE FOR HER

Hey, thank you for adding me! I absolutely love your magazine. It helps me discover new bands and keeps me supplied with fresh sound. I first discovered your magazine at my local Hastings store in Richland, WA. For the longest time they only supplied 2 copies and I would buy them both and give the other one to my girlfriend. I recently went in to buy the new issue and now they stock 6 copies. I was elated. Keep up the good work!
–Paul Marmolejo Jr, via facebook

Ed – Would I be wrong in guessing that this means you two will get married and have four kids? I'm kidding, but am elated with you about that Hastings adding to their stock. Cool!

WOE, NO WOE OF TYRANTS

Hey I was just wondering if y'all had reviewed Woe of Tyrants newest album, *Threnody,* which came out in April? I remember reading the review for their previous album, *Kingdom of Might*, in HM but I don't remember seeing a review for *Threnody*. It's a great album, by the way, steps above their last one. So if y'all did review it, could you tell me what issue it's in? Thanks, Keep up the great work!
–Matt Ingram, via email

Ed – You know what? I admit failure on that one. It was one of those "out of sight, out of mind" issues, with mp3 files quietly sitting on my hard drive and forgotten. I need to repent and get that reviewed on our website (which is the best way to "make up" for an album we missed, instead of printing a review almost a year later in the magazine). Don't you agree?

IS HE BLUSHING?

Just looked at the latest HM magazine article on AB ... geez ... I sure used "great" a lot... I don't think *GLM* deserves #5. I mean it is our best, but above Larry and some of the others? hum... We'll take it, but I think some of you folks are way too gracious. Great edition though. Enjoyed reading about Stryper and write-ups about the other records. I think *Begging* and *Full Circle* are better, but I suppose ya have to pick and choose, and *GLM* is kind of one of those milestones. Blessings to you my friend.
–Mike Stand, via facebook

WOULD YOU LIKE DIGITAL W/THAT?

If I buy the paper subscription do I get the digital subscription also?
–Albert Smith, via website

Ed – Yes. Your print subscription ($18) includes a digital subscription with it. Digital alone is $6.

FLATTERY STYLE POINTS

Love the magazine. Much better than Outburn, AP, and all the rest.
–Benjamin Mortier, via website

Ed – Oh, come on! You know that's not true!?

A UNIQUE ENCOUNTER

I handed out the AILD mags at the Knoxville show. This drunk guy handed me a beer (yes, I took it – just one though) so I handed him a mag and he looks shocked and immediately says: "HM? I remember HM" – and started naming off all these old school Christian metal bands (he was in his 30s). "They are a Christian magazine. Is AILD a Christian band?" So, I was like, "Read the interview, man."
–Kerby Worley, via email

Ed – Wow. May God bless you and that guy.

SCARY MAGAZINE COVERS

Hi, I am wondering how does the magazine come to my house if I subscribe to it? Does it come in a package or in a big envelope or something? Reason why I am concerned is because I want to subscribe, but if it comes and my mom sees scary covers she will throw it out. I listen to heavy music in a very conservative home. Thanks and I will be waiting for a reply.
–Taras Savchuk, via website

Ed – I don't have very exciting news on that front. HM is mailed "Periodical" rate in the mail with no envelope/covering. You could order each issue as a back issue, which does come in an envelope. The freaky or scary-looking musicians we highlight aren't hidden, but instead boldly displayed for your postal courier and fellow residents to see.

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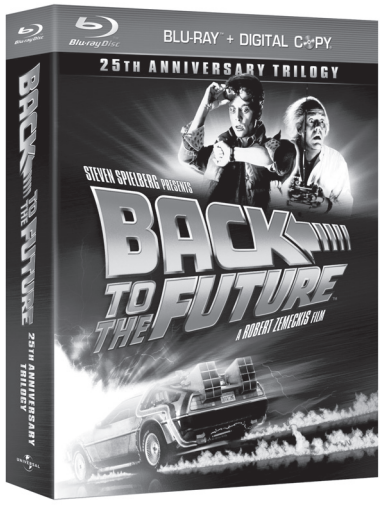

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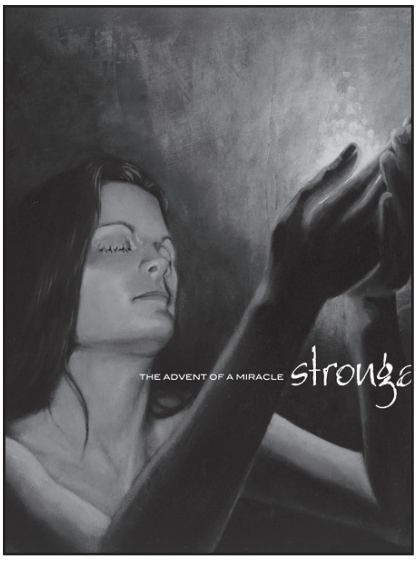

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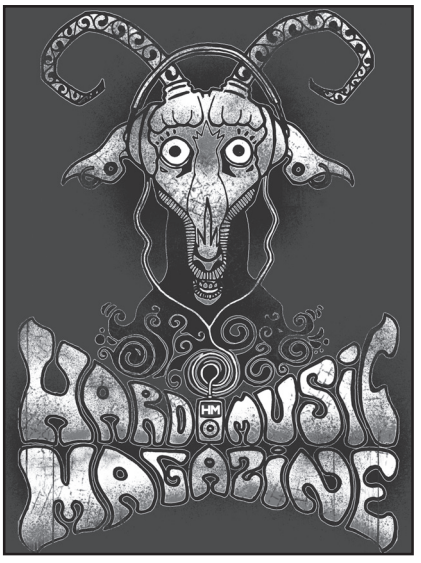

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HARDNEWS
Quick & concise

MICHAEL BEEN DIES
SUFFERS HEART ATTACK IN BELGIUM

A true American rock hero, Michael Been (The Call) passed away on August 19th. Michael was the father of Black Rebel Motorcycle Club's Robert Been and was on the road with them at a festival in Belgium when he died of a heart attack. Those unfamiliar with either band would do well to check out both. The Call created several albums of classic American rock. Not too distant in sound and vision from bands like U2 or The Alarm, The Call was incredibly distinct and had its own, signature style. His influence on his son's band (BRMC) has only been guessed at, but it was probably more than significant.

AS THEY SLEEP
DEATH METALLERS SIGN TO SOLID STATE

Detroit's emerging technical death metal act, As They Sleep, has its forthcoming full-length, and Solid State Records debut, *Dynasty*, coming out on November 22nd. Described as "brutally heavy and savagely technical death metal," it might be the heaviest album to come out on Solid State in a while. The album has a conceptual focus on the rise and fall of empires, and lyrics that touch on ancient Egypt, ancient Rome and Greek mythology. It was mixed by powerhouse audio wizard, Jason Suecoff (All That Remains, Chimaira, Demon Hunter). They'll support this release next month on the *Solid State Records: A Very Metal Christmas Tour*, alongside labelmates Living Sacrifice, The Showdown, Becoming the Archetype and To Speak of Wolves. The song "Oracle of the Dead" is currently streaming on the band's official MySpace.

HM Magazine iPhone app now available

After a very long wait in the Apple queue for it to launch, the HM Magazine "Hard Music Magazine" (which is the best tag to search for it) app is now live and absolutely free in the Apple iTunes App Store. Besides a small collection of photos, you'll find the latest few HM Magazine Podcast episodes, two of our hilarious Gwar HM commercial videos, a music video, links to the hmmag.com site, our twitter feed and (best of all) an RSS feed that brings your iPhone all the latest Hard News from our site. The QR Code (Quick Response Code) above will take your smart phone to the app's location for downloading. After downloading a QR Code reading software on your smart phone, you're able to photograph the small square pattern above, which is then decoded into a link. In the future when you're flipping through the pages of HM, keep an eye out for more QR Codes, because you never know where you'll end up.

News bullets

Adam Dutkiewicz and **Jesse Leach** (both with ties to **Killswitch Engage**) have teamed back up for a band called **Times of Grace**. See a review this issue and look for a feature interview in the next.

As I Lay Dying's highly anticipated limited-edition super deluxe fan box will be in stores on November 9th. The band wraps up its UK tour at the end of November.

On Sunday, July 18, 2010, **MxPx** played a retirement concert for drummer **Yuri Ruley** in Las Vegas. After 18 years and nearly 2.5 million records, having helped pave the way for pop-punk music, Ruley will be departing the band in order to focus more on his family life.

Following the success of their *25th Anniversary World Tour* earlier this year, legendary rock band **Stryper** headed into the studio to work on their newly released album, *The Covering*. It is unlike any previous Stryper records, in that it's a collection of cover songs from bands that inspired them and helped to shape their sound and musical identity (especially guitar-wise). The band recently sold out of the first pressing of its collector's picture book, *By His Strypes*.

For Today will be touring Europe the first part of November. Their video for "Devastator" is awesome.

Haste the Day is in the midst of a co-headlining tour with Enter Shikari.

Impending Doom recently released a video for the song "There Will Be Violence." The band is out on a massive tour with Whitechapel at presstime.

Underoath hits the road with A Day to Remember & The Word Alive for a massive tour that runs through the end of November.

In the Midst of Lions have released a video for the song "The Machine."

Skillet's *Awake* album just went Gold.

Michael Knott, **Brian Doidge** and **Chuck Cummings** have reunited for an **Aunt Betty's Ford** show on Sept. 14 in Costa Mesa, CA. Stay tuned for more action.

Get late-breaking news once a week! sign up for the HM e-mail list at hmmag.com

Your Memorial

BY MEGAN GRAHAM

In 2009, after their performance at the Sonshine festival, the local quintet, Your Memorial, was approached by Jason Dunn, founder of Facedown Records. A few months later the deal was sealed and they were officially a signed band on their way to making the follow-up to their self-released album, *Seasons*. Getting into the studio for the second time, the band discovered the new level and intensity at which they were recording and are excited about the outcome.

While discussing the release of their new album, *Atonement*, due out November 23rd, guitarist Willie Weigel described the presence of everyday situations, emotions and experiences within their songs. As a band they listen to a large variety of music. With that influence enhancing the diversity of the album, they find themselves able to reach a larger listening population. Simply put, they have a little something for everyone.

Atonement represents the internal struggle between good and evil and the desire for good to prevail. Vocalist Blake Earring expressed, in regard to its content: "It's definitely more spiritual; definitely more personal. Each song is a story and a part of either my life or (drummer) Tom's life or somebody's. We can all connect to a certain song or a couple songs…" Describing the new album, Willie emphasized the maturity and growth in their sound: "It's a little bit, a step in a new direction, but we're still keeping the same kind of style … we want to progress as musicians and not just write heavier songs just to write heavier songs. I feel these songs flow a lot better. They are more melodic and also heavier at the same time. I think it's just a natural progression from the last album."

The band, comprised of Blake Earring/vocals, Willie Weigel/Guitars, Tom Weigel/Drums and Mike "Skip" Helms/Bass, find some of their best memories together from being on the road. Willie recalls, "Driving through winter storms in Minnesota to driving through 110-degree heat in Texas with no AC, touring is just a life experience. We haven't been out there a ton, but we've been out there enough to know that it brings you together or it can do the opposite. Thank God, it brings us together."

With almost five years under their belts, the band expresses nothing but gratitude for everyone that has supported them and continues to do so along the way.

Making the highest chart debut of its career, **The Devil Wears Prada** saw its *Zombie EP* enter the Billboard Top 200 Albums chart at #10, with nearly 25,000 copies sold. TDWP also released the JL Bourne-written, 14-page comic book called *ZOMBIE, the EP Comic*, that features the band members as five combat soldiers on a perilous, top-secret mission in a world infected by zombies.

Anberlin & **Flyleaf** have tracks on the new *Guitar Hero: Warriors of Rock* video game.

12 Stones has parted ways with Wind-Up Records after 9 years. The band stated "We felt it was time for a change. We have a vision for this band that we feel is best pursued elsewhere."

MUTEMATH will release a DVD, accompanied with a live audio CD, titled *Armistice Live*, on Teleprompt/Warner Bros. This, their second live DVD, captures the band's electrifying performance at the famous Tabernacle in Atlanta, GA, during their fall 2009 tour.

The Almost released a new video for "No, I Don't" on ransom.tv and are streaming a new song ("Wrong") on their MySpace. They also released a Deluxe Edition and EP of *Monster Monster* on Oct. 25.

The Chariot released a brand new music video for the track "David De La Hoz." They're now on tour.

Disciple has re-recorded its song "Dear X" with Howard Benson with plans for a mainstream push. Go, Disciple!

Project 86 is releasing (on 12/7) a live album to celebrate its 15 years together, called *15.Live*.

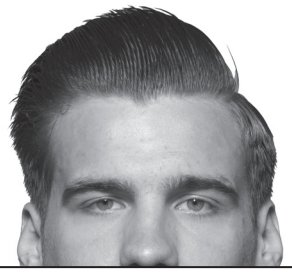
Artist Series Guitars is releasing a custom **Demon Hunter** model. We bet that'll look sweet.

Dustin Kensrue is venturing out on a solo acoustic tour called *Where's The Band?* It'll be the Thrice frontman along with: Matt Pryor (The Get Up Kids, The New Amsterdams), Chris Conley (Saves The Day, Two Tongues) and Anthony Raneri (Bayside).

g_editorial

guest editorial, God editorial
op-ed (opposite the editorial page)

mike reynolds
guitaris
For Today



Life with the Holy Spirit is an everyday effort, to put ourselves into a place of surrender, to listen to His voice and to experience His presence. May this encourage you and edify you as children of God. Here we go:

In the last issue we talked about receiving and knowing God's love deeply and intimately and how, through encountering His love, "You will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God" (See Eph 3:14-21).

Now this "Fullness of life and power that comes from God" is referring to the full stature of Christ. It is a very simple statement. Basically, if you are washed and submerged in the love of God you will be transformed into the image of Jesus. Now, Jesus is the standard of Christian life, anything below the standard He set is sub-par and incomplete. The love of God reveals, and makes us aware of all that the blood of Jesus paid for us to have and to be. Soaking in the reality of His love will manifest the reality of who you are as your own awareness of His identity increases.

Here is my point: He lives in you by faith. He dwells inside of you. You can never get farther from or closer to the God who lives in you, only an increased awareness of His presence. What He says about you in love will be manifest as an earthly reality by faith. Faith is the action of believing in the reality you cannot yet see. It is living as though what heaven says is truer than what you see with your eyes. By this faith you will be complete, on earth as you are in heaven.

The love of God brings about an awareness of your identity. This awareness will transform your whole person into the image of the firstborn son of God. You cannot strive to attain the identity that God has freely given you through the blood of His Son. It is only able to be received and welcomed in. Meditate on His love, Who He is and Who He says you are. He loves you magnificently, perfectly, wholly and His love lacks no good thing.

The question is: are you aware of what you have? If only we would begin to know all that the blood of Jesus has paid for. Think big!

My prayer is that we habitually find ourselves only hungering for the love and validation of the Father. His verdict is the only one that matters.

STREET TEAM REPORT

As a part of the all-new HM Street Team, reporter Jason Laughinghouse was sent out to interview Demon Hunter frontman Ryan Clark.

Jason: Obviously, your logo is pretty self-explanatory, but elaborate a little further on the history behind it.

RC: The logo came before we had written any music. We came up with the band name and the logo came immediately after that. The logo is just a literal interpretation of the name, Demon Hunter, with a demon skull with a bullet hole in the middle. More or less, it's just a literal interpretation of the name.

What was the inspiration behind *The World is a Thorn*?

The gist of a lot of the songs on the record are about the depletion of morals and values of the nation and the world as a whole as times goes on. It's been something that I pay more attention to now that I'm getting older, or maybe it's just a natural cycle of things. But, in my eyes, in the last 10-15 years, the ideas and concepts that everything is permissible and anything you want to do is cool, there's no authority, no judgment, no leadership, no anything, and this has become the norm on how everyone wants to live their life. So, it's just a take on that and an adverse side of that whole mentality.

This is the first CD without your brother. How are things different now with his absence?

As far as recording and writing, things are a little bit different because I obviously have more on my plate. I've always done a lot of the writing, musically and lyrically, so there wasn't anything unfamiliar there, but it just meant doing more of it. Normally I would write 3 or 4 songs on my own, and then my brother and I would get together to collaborate for the rest of the record. So, this time it just meant I was doing everything on my own. I got a huge head start on this record, a bigger head start than I have ever before, so that helped a lot. The recording process for this record flowed pretty well. It's always been me, Yogi and my brother. I tended to play a lot of guitar on the past records, because it's easier to record the parts you write and teach them later to the guitar players. But, on this record the difference was that Patrick recorded all the guitars for this record since Don isn't there. I wrote everything but the leads, and I actually flew him in a couple months before we recorded to collaborate on the leads. He basically came up with everything. I had my ideas here and there, but I just let him do his thing.

The biggest thing that is different about the band without my brother, that no one would really notice, is [that] he was the business mind of the band. He was the guy that took care of hiring a crew for tour, he talked to our manager more often than I would about this or that. Pretty much all that kind of stuff that I'm not geared mentally for. So, when he left I had to take the reins of that, which was one of the biggest changes for me.

Growing up your dad was a pastor. What were his views on what you're doing?

He loves it. Both my parents love it. When we were younger it took them awhile to come around to the sound and the style, but the character of our persons – both my brother and I, were far more important to them than the music we were into and how we looked. They aren't weird or judgmental about the style or scene we are in, but like I said, it took them a little getting used to when we were younger with all the tattoos and stuff, which was an uphill battle, but now they are super proud and actually love the music.

[*To read the rest of Jason's great interview with Ryan, go to hmmag.com*]

For more information on how to join the HM Street Team visit *hmmag.com/street-team*

LIVE REPORT

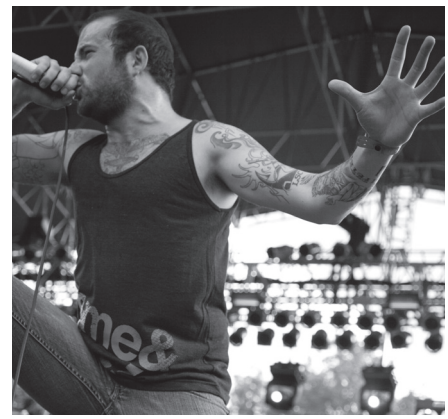
Revelation Generation Festival 2010

September 4-5

REVIEW BY DOUG VAN PELT

(Frenchtown, NJ) This two-day festival ran just like a machine once again, with a friendly and helpful environment that supported killer performance after killer performance. While the Main Stage offered some big acts (like Skillet, Relient K and Tobymac's ERACE All-Star Jam), the hottest action took place at the Philadelphia and Come&Live stages.

Saturday kicked in with energy early with a spirited and frenetic set by **August Burns Red**. It was impressive to see the giant circle pit during their speedy tunes. **A Plea For Purging**, **Impending Doom**, **Sleeping Giant** and **Maylene** put in back-to-back-to-back-to-back sets at the Come&Live tent, which stayed packed the entire time. **The Devil Wears Prada** wrapped things up on the Philly Stage at the early hour of 8 p.m., allowing young headbangers to wring out every last drop of energy and still have time to rest up for the next day.



A small, barely known band from San Antonio, Texas, **Nothing More**, started things off on Sunday and impressed anyone that saw their performance. They leapt over my pre-conception from just having heard their debut album, which is pretty good. The bassist started the show by banging hard on a sheet of metal that hung behind a tom drum fashioned as a drum stand. Then he clobbered a crumpled aluminum trash can with a giant 2" diameter PVC pipe. Later, for their finale, the band had an all-out percussion fest, with one member holding a pair of big toms on each shoulder while two guys rotated from a couple toms mounted horizontally on a floor stand, then spinning around each other to alternate on the two that were manually held in place. It was a great energetic ending that captured the crowd's attention.

Showbread came out next, but I didn't recognize them as only a four-piece. Josh Dies came out and played the first three or four songs on guitar, then he switched to drums for an instrumental called "In The House" (from the *28 Days Later* movie). He shared about the church in America, encouraging us to counter the sometimes accurate criticism we get for being hypocritical, etc.

Mae's melodic aesthetic was appreciated and the dynamic contrast of their drummer's powerful pounding against his snare drum and cymbals as the band evokes an Explosions in the Sky vibe was fun to watch. Hearing the active audience finish a verse out loud is also something really cool to experience.

The short prayer time during **MyChildren MyBride**'s set was touching to see, as everyone seemed to participate. It's also cool to see how well the band connects with its audience, as the transitions from slamming, heavy riffs to quiet moments flow effortlessly.

Prior to **Anberlin**'s closing set was one of a few live painting exhibitions by Eric Samuel Timm. It was cool to hear people gasp when he flipped the canvas over to reveal an unexpected portrait. Anberlin's set later was fast, engaging and fun. The couple new songs they played sounded well alongside the rest of their catalog. It went by fast, but it didn't sound rushed at all. What a great weekend.

Clockwise from top: Guitarist JB Brubaker and drummer Matt Greiner of ABR; Jake Luhrs; TDWP's Mike Hranica; MCMB's crowd and frontman Matthew Hasting. Photos: Jim Layton

WAR OF AGES' STEVE BROWN AT PURPLE DOOR

Photo: Kim Flanders

BRIAN "HEAD" WELCH AT FORTYFEST

Photo: Megan Graham

SWITCHFOOT'S JON FOREMAN AT ACL

Photo: DVP

FUTURE OF FORESTRY

"It was just a lot of work I took upon myself, kind of as flying a flag of independence. Hopefully setting an example to a lot of indie bands that are out there trying to create, but that are saying, 'Oh, I need a record label to do that,' or 'I need more help,' or whatever."

Photos: Esther Havens

Imagine if you will, the feeling or sensation you get when soaring through the sky, setting sail into the open sea, or driving down an airy road. Eric Owyoung took his interpretation of the impressions these forms of wayfaring evoked and created the *Travel* series. Capped off in June, *Travel III* was the third and final piece of the puzzle. Each album, musically, lyrically and artistically captures the essence of the object of transportation it represents. The undertaking of the project, as a whole, was a big task for Owyoung. "The *Travel* series is a little bit of a labor of love. It's like I was so involved in every aspect of it. Even the artwork – actually, I did all the photos for the album and my wife painted the first two covers. So it was a labor of love and I emphasize labor, because it was just a lot of work I took upon myself, kind of as flying a flag of independence. Hopefully setting an example to a lot of indie bands that are out there trying to create but that are saying, 'Oh, I need a record label to do that,' or 'I need more help,' or whatever. I wanted to say, you know, 'We as artists need to take ownership over what we do and be excited about it and do a good job with it and fully own it and be that creative author,' so I did that."

When asked about what his favorite part of the creative process is, Owyoung described it as painful. "I wish I could say I enjoy the process, but I'm usually pulling my hair out in the process and the only part of the process that I find myself really, really enjoying is more when you step back and go, 'Wow, that sounds amazing!' or 'Wow, that was a great idea.' But, you know, ninety-nine percent of the time is not 'Wow, that's a great idea!' Ninety-nine percent of the time it's like, 'Uh, that's a really crappy idea,' so I don't know if I have a favorite. I guess the favorite part, is that one percent where you get to step back and see something happen. Incidentally, I had a moment yesterday where I was recording vocals and it was one of those moments. It was a spiritual moment where I recognized the lyrics I had written, why I wrote them and it was just a powerful realization. Kind of, me just connecting to the music and connecting to God and, like, really having a spiritual experience. I wish I could say that happens all the time, but it doesn't. It's a very rare moment, but a really important moment, something that I step back from and go, 'Oh my gosh, *that's* why I do music.'"

With the winter and Christmas season approaching, Owyoung set out to create *Advent: Part 2*, the follow-up to his first *Advent* Christmas album release. Featuring songs such as "Angels We Have Heard on High" and "Do You See What I See," as well as an old Latin liturgical set called "Pie Jesu," the album is not shy of uniqueness or variety. In December Future of Forestry will embark on the fourth year of the Christmas tour, designed as a relief from the busyness of the season and as Owyoung would describe it, "a time and a space to meet with God and to really feel and experience peace." After all, isn't that what the season is all about?

BY MEGAN GRAHAM

MESSENGERS

It has been has a long two years for Chad and Chance Paramore. The Paramores are one of the best brother duos since the Quiggle brothers Davey and Dan of xDisciplex AD and Jesus Wept. I met the Paramore brothers four years ago at a War of Ages show in downtown Dallas, when they were in a band called Donna Mea. They recognized me from the *Facedown Fest 2004* DVD. We hung out that whole night and became fast friends. I watched their band see highs and lows. Then the long wait for the new band called Messengers. The wait is finally over and now they are living their dream.

What are your names and what do you do in Messengers?
Chad Paramore – vocals.
Chance Paramore – guitar.

So you're brothers? How long have you two been playing music together?
Chad: Yes, we are brothers. Well, at least that's what people tell us. Chance and I have been playing in bands together for over 5 years.

Most bands take a few albums to find their sound. How long did it take you?
Chance: Well, it's hard to say, because we have always tried to play what we thought was good. We have been a band for almost two years and throughout that time we have thrown out a lot of music.
Chad: I mean, we have only been playing real shows since last October; it was probably about then, our writing just kind of clicked.

Why did you want to play the thrash crossover style?
Chad: All of us have been early '90s late '80s hardcore fans of bands like D.R.I, Cro-mags, Pantera, Crowbar, Leeway. It has been such a huge style in Texas hardcore, it is what comes naturally to us.

Do you guys consider your self a Spirit-filled hardcore band or a Christian hardcore band? What is the difference to you?
Chad: Probably more of a Spirit-filled band. Christian hardcore sounds like a genre. We are more just a hardcore band fueled by the Spirit of God. Not that we have a problem with the label. It's just our opinion on the matter.

What Christian bands did you grow up on that still influence you today?
Chance: The Crucified, NIV, Living Sacrifice and Embodyment were all huge in our lives and still are today. When we write we look to those bands as inspiration.

What would be a realistic dream tour for you guys?
Chance: Agnostic Front, NIV, Bitter End, Messengers!
(Chad and Chance high five each other)
Chad: Heck yeah, dude!

What is it like being a part of the Facedown fam and Strike First clan?
Chad: So far it's been great talking with Jason and Dave. They have treated us wonderfully (they're) just really encouraging people. It's been a dream of each and every member to be apart of the family no matter what it took this is our dream label.

Is there anything that you have seen in the world that makes your heart sink?
Chad: There are a lot of big issues out there, but more than lately the sex trafficking issues overseas has really tugged our heart, so we are trying to research companies that look like they're making the most difference and trying to see what we can do to put a stop to this as quick as possible. Something that hits more home for us is the homeless. In Deep Ellum you get homeless guys asking for money all the time.

Thanks for your time. I can't wait to see what the future holds for you guys.
Chad: Thank you for interviewing us.

BY ROB SHAMELESS

GRAMMATRAIN

Grammatrain is back. Heck, with Soundgarden reuniting to headline 2010's Lollapalooza and Alice In Chains touring and recording with a new vocalist, perhaps the grunge sound Grammatrain helped pioneer so many years ago is also back. Its comeback album, *Imperium*, features the original lineup of singer/guitarist Pete Stewart, bassist Dalton Roraback, and drummer Paul Roraback. Grammatrain fans may well thank the country of Germany for helping put this powerful rock trio back together again.

"I got an email from a promoter in Germany who has a festival every year that we used to play," says Stewart over the phone from his home in Seattle. "He said he still gets asked quite a bit about Grammatrain. He said, 'I don't know if there's any chance you'd ever want to play, but we'd love to have you here again if you did.'" Coincidentally, the trio had already made tentative steps to record together again when Stewart received this activating email. And when he ran this proposition by the Roraback brothers, they were both up for it.

Much has changed in the 10 years or so since Grammatrain was originally an active force. For one thing, Stewart no longer considers himself a Christian. But making great music together is probably what matters most to these musicians nowadays, so that is exactly what they're trying to do.

"We're on the same page in the sense that we know what the situation is, and everybody's cool with what the situation is," Stewart explains. "Dalton and Paul still consider themselves Christians and are very devoutly so, and they both know that I'm not a Christian. We've talked about this, and they honestly have been – I would say – shining examples of how to be a friend to somebody who might have different beliefs than you do."

Focusing on making the best possible music is nothing new to Grammatrain. In fact, that's always been a central goal for the band – even when great art did not appear to be a priority in the Christian music business.

"I don't think we ever considered ourselves, like, a full-on youth group band, like Audio Adrenaline or something like that," Stewart recalls. "One of the things that used to frustrate us about being in the Christian marketplace is that it always felt like the music was so secondary sometimes, that it almost didn't matter to a lot of the people that we worked with."

Stewart does not call himself a Christian, but he comes off as one of the nicest guys you'll ever want to meet. It's not unusual for musicians that turn away from Christianity to become bitter and downright nasty. (Can you say, 'Roger Martinez?') Instead, Stewart is – if anything – extra sensitive to the feelings and beliefs of his two fellow musicians.

"I'm not going to write lyrics about anything that's going to be offensive to the other two guys; that they're not going to want to stand behind," clarifies Stewart. "So it's not like we have to have debate what any of the songs are about."

Perhaps it's also important to establish that, while Stewart was in Grammatrain, he was nothing less than a true believer. "During the time we were Grammatrain, I never felt like I was a non-Christian pretending to be someone that I wasn't," Stewart explains. "It really was after the band stopped that I started dealing with a lot of doubts that I had had inside that I had sort of subconsciously put away and not really dealt with. And once I started examining those and really accepting them for what they were and sort of letting myself go there mentally, it led me down a path where eventually I had to admit to myself I'm not what I've been saying I have been."

Stewart's personal theology may have changed significantly, but Grammatrain's *Imperium* reveals a band that still has the magical music touch. Welcome back, Grammatrain! (Oh, and thanks, Germany).

BY DAN MACINTOSH

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"I got an email from a promoter in Germany who has a festival every year that we used to play," says Stewart over the phone from his home in Seattle. "He said he still gets asked quite a bit about Grammatrain. He said, 'I don't know if there's any chance you'd ever want to play, but we'd love to have you here again if you did.'" Coincidentally, the trio had already made tentative steps to record together again when Stewart received this activating email. And when he ran this proposition by the Roraback brothers, they were both up for it.

Much has changed in the 10 years or so since Grammatrain was originally an active force. For one thing, Stewart no longer considers himself a Christian. But making great music together is probably what matters most to these musicians nowadays, so that is exactly what they're trying to do.

"We're on the same page in the sense that we know what the situation is, and everybody's cool with what the situation is," Stewart explains. "Dalton and Paul still consider themselves Christians and are very devoutly so, and they both know that I'm not a Christian. We've talked about this, and they honestly have been – I would say – shining examples of how to be a friend to somebody who might have different beliefs than you do."

Focusing on making the best possible music is nothing new to Grammatrain. In fact, that's always been a central goal for the band – even when great art did not appear to be a priority in the Christian music business.

"I don't think we ever considered ourselves, like, a full-on youth group band, like Audio Adrenaline or something like that," Stewart recalls. "One of the things that used to frustrate us about being in the Christian marketplace is that it always felt like the music was so secondary sometimes, that it almost didn't matter to a lot of the people that we worked with."

Stewart does not call himself a Christian, but he comes off as one of the nicest guys you'll ever want to meet. It's not unusual for musicians that turn away from Christianity to become bitter and downright nasty. (Can you say, 'Roger Martinez?') Instead, Stewart is – if anything – extra sensitive to the feelings and beliefs of his two fellow musicians.

"I'm not going to write lyrics about anything that's going to be offensive to the other two guys; that they're not going to want to stand behind," clarifies Stewart. "So it's not like we have to have debate what any of the songs are about."

Perhaps it's also important to establish that, while Stewart was in Grammatrain, he was nothing less than a true believer. "During the time we were Grammatrain, I never felt like I was a non-Christian pretending to be someone that I wasn't," Stewart explains. "It really was after the band stopped that I started dealing with a lot of doubts that I had had inside that I had sort of subconsciously put away and not really dealt with. And once I started examining those and really accepting them for what they were and sort of letting myself go there mentally, it led me down a path where eventually I had to admit to myself I'm not what I've been saying I have been."

Stewart's personal theology may have changed significantly, but Grammatrain's *Imperium* reveals a band that still has the magical music touch. Welcome back, Grammatrain! (Oh, and thanks, Germany).

BY DAN MACINTOSH

8 artists worth checking out right now and into 2011...

Bradley Hathaway

Poet tuned singer/songwriter Bradley Hathaway got his start in 2005 with the release of his book/CD combo *All The Hits So Far But Don't Expect Too Much*. The book features poems such as "The annoying hardcore dude that goes too far" and "the hug poem." Following that release he transitioned into the musical side with the album *The Things that Poets Write About, the Songs that Singers Sing About*. Hathaway's songs touch on issues of life, love and the inevitable sorrow everyone at some point faces. In his latest release, *A Thousand Angry Panthers*, Hathaway has incorporated a beautiful blend of strings to couple the storyteller lyrics expelled by his distinctively unique vocals and sound.

Sons of God

Not just another band making music. Sons of God look at music as the medium through which they serve. Their music expresses the heart of the band through powerful lyrics concerning all aspects of spiritual life. From doubt to grace and sanctification, each song has a significant message. Led by Aaron Newberry, with a voice that softly pierces through the surrounding swells of guitar, keys and drums, the music becomes transcendent. At any moment a song can go from a slow blues vibe to a picked up experimental edgy rock sound, creating the perfect formula. Easily draws one in, it would be impossible not to experience the genuine, heartfelt, Christ-centered passion of this quintet.

Receiving the Ghost

Beautiful melodies, anchored to heartfelt lyrics and complementary guitar rhythms, give Receiving the Ghost their defining whimsical sound. Lead vocalist, Leticia Kreider, studied music with the Hillsong International Leadership College in Australia, growing lyrically, vocally and instrumentally. Shortly after her return to Lancaster, PA the band developed and have been enjoying making music together ever since. Kreider expressed how some of their best times together come from band practices: "It's really weird, but seriously we waste, like, an hour of our band practices just watching YouTube videos." This foursome knows how to joke around, but is serious about making good music. With a new album on the horizon their view looks nothing but bright.

Affiance

Crossing the line from indie to signed, Affiance recently got snagged up and recognized by Bullet Tooth Records. The band is releasing their first full-length album on their new label, *No Secrets Revealed*, in the fall. They have a sound that brought Bullet Tooth president, Josh Grabelle, out in a hurricane to see them live. He was blown away, not from the hurricane, but from the knock-your-socks-off sound that was coming from the stage. With a combination of metal driving guitars and vocals that resonate beyond all the sounds, they have a standout quality that is impossible to resist.

Stephen Paul Smoker

Formerly of The Mint and mewithoutYou, Lancaster, PA native, Stephen Paul Smoker picked up everything and headed to Chicago to create music on his own terms. Smoker shares, "I moved to Chicago to play music with my best friend, Grace Kulp, a project I am still involved in. Playing in a band with people you love and respect is key. If those things aren't in place the capacity to create and function as an artist is almost impossible. I am fortunate enough to have people I love to play music with in Chicago. It makes the winters warmer." In his debut solo album *Violet Sun/Violent Sun*, Smoker has been able to make his passions and creative input come to life. Smoker would describe his songs as "Dream Pop." They have a steady-flowing rhythm carried by piano notes and guitar that connect all the musical elements in a delicately laced manor.

Mae

In 2009 Mae had a goal to reach out to those in need. They did so by raising $67,104 with the support of the Mae community. Each month the band released a song, independently of a label, and accepted donations that were used wholly toward the various community outreaches they were involved with. From helping out at food drives to building new homes, Mae became very proactive in impacting the world around them. Their sound is high toned, upbeat, steady guitar rhythmic pop-rock with a hint of electronics. After dedicating a year to outreach and missions then taking time for personal reflection and growth, the original five members are joining together for one final fall tour, *Goodbye, and Goodnight*. It's the first tour in three years with the original five and the last, at this point, indefinitely; they plan to make it a memorable one.

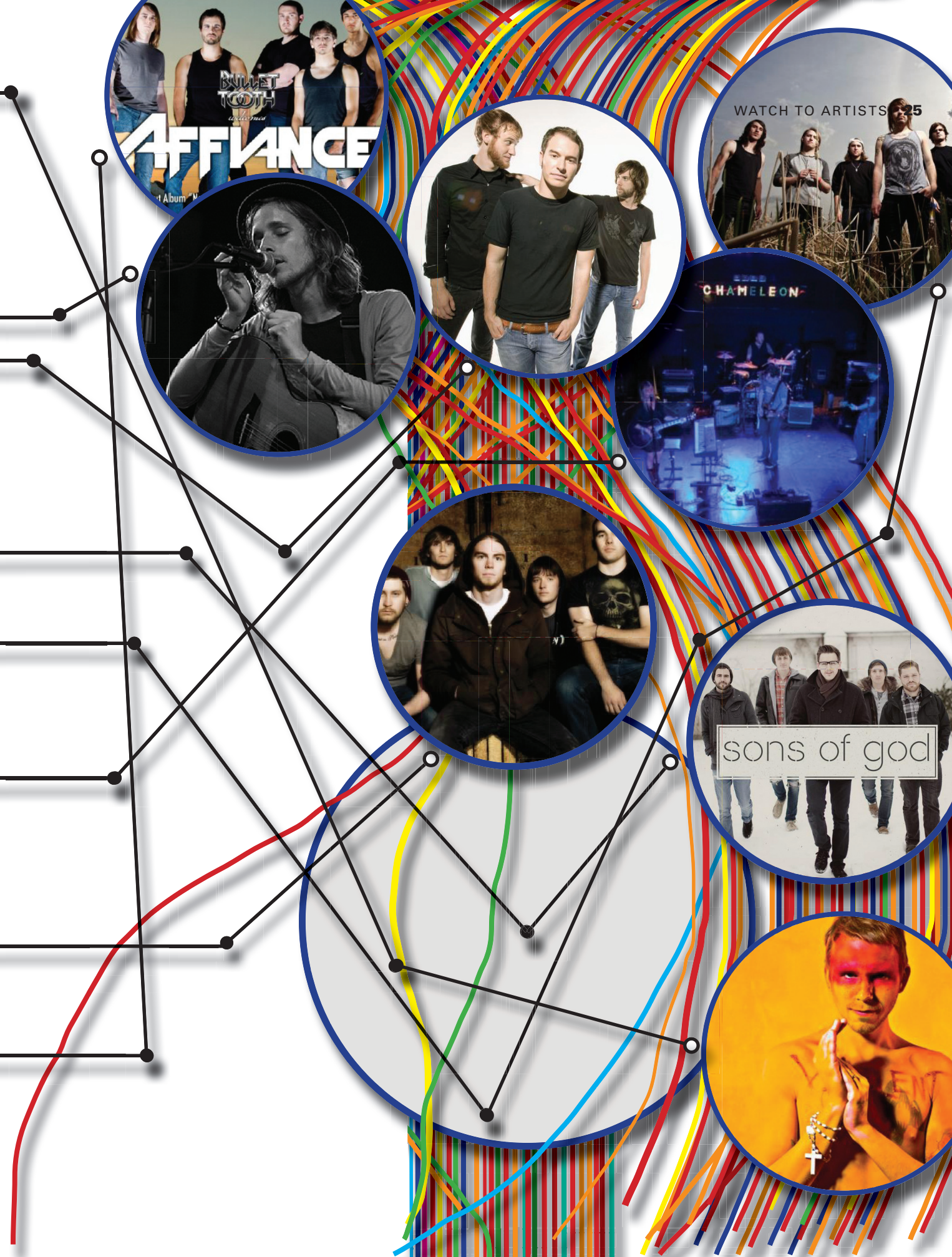
A Sequence of Ghosts

A Sequence of Ghosts created their sound from a collection of musical backgrounds. Lead vocalist, Jesse, describes it as, "an interesting mix up of ideas and directions. We're into everything from Relient K to Advent. The music we actually write and put to the ASOG brand is a mixture of ambient, hardcore and sheer passion. It's a lot of fun." Want to get to know ASOG? Not only if you go to a show, they are personable and eager to meet new people, but just by listening to their music you can get a glimpse of who they are. Jesse explains, "Our personalities and our hearts show right through our music. So what you hear when listening to ASOG is us completely. We sing and play music about our struggles, our joy and what makes blood pump through our veins and makes us want to get up every day to do what we were put on this earth for. We use our music as an outlet to worship our Lord and Savior."

Righteous Vendetta

Having a variety of musical backgrounds and influences, Righteous Vendetta has taken from their mixture of inspirations to invent their own sound. With a hybrid junction of metal, experimental sounds, melodies, deep growls to high pitched screams, this aspiring group of musicians are bound to reach a large variety of listeners. Their debut album, *The Dawning*, to be released on Red Chord Records, serves up songs loaded with heavy guitar breakdown as well as pretty sick drum rhythms. Fresh on the radar, soon enough they will be hard to miss.

BY MEGAN GRAHAM


BULLET TOOTH
AFFIANCE
WATCH TO ARTISTS
CHAMELEON
sons of god

In less than a year the band I Am Alpha And Omega has experienced a lifetime's worth of drama for any band. They started out with a simple vision and goal – to stay free and unsigned – but the journey has been anything but smooth. While they were singing hardcore worship/love songs to God, perhaps He was trying to communicate a country song to them – "I Never Promised You a Rose Garden."

"We knew we were at a place where we needed to grow – we needed to progress," explains frontman Donny Hardy. "I think our original idea was to kind of self-promote, self-release, basically act as our own label." The band of go-getters drew up a business plan and went after it. "We started with pre-production and a goal (to) make the best music we could possibly make. We knew that ultimately – no matter what you did as far as marketing, advertising and promotion – if your music wasn't good enough, it's not really going to make a difference. For a good four months solid we worked really hard on that – from planning pre-orders to marketing strategies and basically did what we thought any solid label would do. We had always felt that maybe a label wasn't the right road for us. We'd always felt like the Lord was telling us to go another route. Come&Live was on our heart. We felt really connected to that.

"We were in the middle of a tour in May with Oh, Sleeper and Greeley Estates and a number of other bands and there was a label that started to show interest in working with us. It was something that we hadn't really factored in or considered, but after talking and feeling like maybe it was something we should consider, we agreed to hold back the release and talk to them.

"It was a little bit of a heavy talk for us, because we felt like we had put so much work into it, but we felt like maybe it was the hand of God saying, 'You guys have done this and I'm going to pick it up from here and take it in another direction.' And we started talking to them. That was Tragic Hero. Really great talks. Good people there. One thing that we were clear on as a band was, if the contract wasn't something that was significant, it wasn't something we were going to sign. We feel like we've done a relatively okay job. It was really more the Lord's work of doing some promotion and building a little bit of small following of some kind. But, when the contracts came, they just weren't really strong enough, we felt like, to sign. We conveyed that and they were really receptive of that, but at that time a second label started to talk to us. That went really well, but they were re-working their deal with their parent company and they were in a freeze.

"Here we were, sitting on almost 400 pre-orders. People are wondering what's going on with the record. We're holding people's money that are supporting us, that care about us. We just kind of sat down and prayed about it and realized that we need to get the record out. People have waited and you can't delay this.

"I still don't know what all the pieces and all the ups and downs mean in the big sense of things, but I can say that we have a tremendous peace. It's a real big relief to finally get the record out. It's amazing how God works, because we went from one end of the spectrum to the other. Basically, the record's on our site. You can download it for free or you can donate and download. We tremendously need support, but we feel like with the whole piracy age – it's not going anywhere. It's kind of created this dichotomy within the industry where people that are gonna pay for your record are gonna pay for it and people that are just gonna steal it are gonna steal it. We didn't want to put anybody in that kind of situation. Just take it if you don't feel like donating, but if you download it, love it and give us what you think is fair. It's been really insane, but the strange thing about it is through all the craziness we have peace about it all."

Then there has been some personnel changes. "Touring is one of those things," continues Hardy. "I honestly don't know how I do it. I'm such a homebody. I'm the type of person that doesn't really like to do anything. I think touring has a really glamorous kind of sound to it, but there's a lot of really hard, kind of grueling things about it, too. I love each and every one of the guys we've played with dearly, but touring takes its toll. Especially when you're not touring in the most comfortable fashion. The member change thing is really hard. I personally get attached to people."

It brought Hardy to his knees. "'God, what is the meaning of people joining and they can't do it anymore? Can you bring stability?' And the answer I kinda got was, 'Don't even worry about it. This is mine and I'm going to provide what you need, but don't worry about it.' After all this kind of roller coaster stuff, struggling between where does my calling end and my responsibility as a husband and a man take place, too? For a little bit this whole up and down just kind of shell-shocked us. We took a couple of weeks to literally not think about the band – to just kind of clear our head and find out what the Lord is trying to say. What does He want? For a little bit I think I kinda felt a little like maybe this is it for me. I don't know what the Lord will do. I do see Him moving. I see Him working and I see the ministry bearing fruit. I can't say. I know that it's in our heart to continue. I'm trying to figure out what direction to go in. I'm sure that we're going to do some more touring. It's something that I think we're all praying about. What does the Lord really want? It's so hard to separate the world and then yourself and then what the Lord wants – and have all three of those things weighing on you and trying to sort through it is something that I don't think I will ever master or really truly learn, but it's something that, thankfully ... like, my wife, for instance, she's just a voice of wisdom. She will say, 'It's not time to stop. It's not time to give it up.' In the past week or so we've felt a really strong renewing and rejuvenation just in the sense of starting a new chapter in finally getting this record out. It's felt so good.

"But then we had that whole thing with the record leaking. Tragic released the record. We're still not sure exactly what happened. They released the record for 36 hours on Amazon and iTunes. Now it's all over a million illegal sites and that kind of took the wind out of us a little bit. Even though we're releasing it now, we'll never really know the impact now, because it leaked. We weren't ready for it. We weren't prepared for it. We had no idea. I found out through text messages.

"But God has a reason for all of this. I may not ever know what that is, but maybe it's not important that I do."

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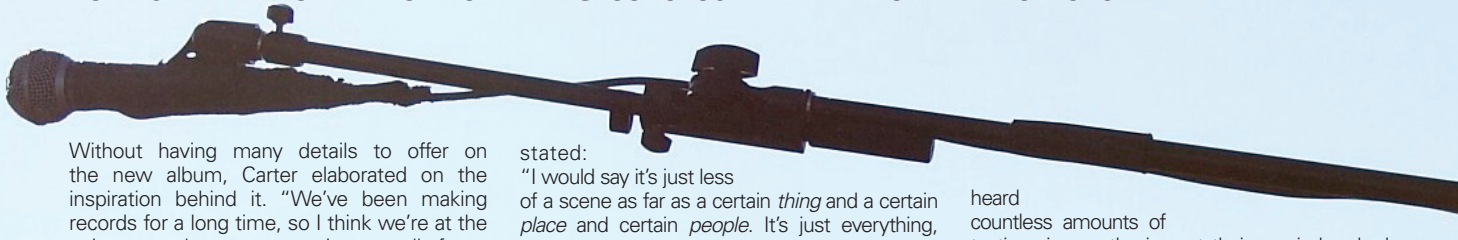
[*Hear this interview and more on the HM Magazine Podcast at podcast.hmmag.com*]

AM ALPHA AND OMEGA

BY DOUG VAN PELT

IT WAS MID-AFTERNOON. THE HEAT AND ENERGY AT FORTY FEST WAS HIGH. MANY BANDS HAD ALREADY ROCKED THE STAGE AND THE WEDDING WAS ABOUT TO MAKE THEIR ENTRANCE. BACK AT THE MEDIA TENT, EMERY HAD JUST ARRIVED AND SITUATED THEMSELVES AROUND A TABLE AMIDST THE SLEW OF PEOPLE SEEKING RELIEF FROM THE SCORCHING SUN. SITTING DOWN AMONGST THE QUINTET, THE CONVERSATION WAS ALREADY FLOWING AND THE BACKGROUND NOISE PROVED AS NO DISTRACTION. AFTER SOME INTRODUCTIONS AND SMALL TALK THE FOCUS TURNED TO THEIR NEW ALBUM, SET TO BE RELEASED IN NOVEMBER. WHEN ASKED WHAT TO EXPECT, MATT CARTER EXPRESSED, "WE'RE STILL WORKING ON IT SO WE CAN'T TELL YOU ENTIRELY YET, BUT IT'LL HAVE A GOOD MIX OF STUFF ON IT. STUFF THAT WE'VE DONE BEFORE AND STUFF THAT WE'RE GOING TO TRY TO DO NOW, THAT WE MAYBE HAVE NEVER DONE BEFORE." WITH THE ALBUM STILL BEING IN THE GROUND STAGES, A TITLE HAS YET TO BE DECIDED ON. TOBY MORRELL JOKINGLY VOICED HIS OPINION FOR A NAME, "I WANT TO CALL IT 'WE DO WHAT WE WANT,' 'CAUSE I DON'T CARE WHAT OTHER PEOPLE SAY." THE GROUP CHUCKLED AT THE BOLD AND HONEST STATEMENT.



Without having many details to offer on the new album, Carter elaborated on the inspiration behind it. "We've been making records for a long time, so I think we're at the point now where we are trying to really focus on the things that we think that we do well and emphasize them … the things that we know that we do that are unique." With dual lead vocals and the ripping screams of Josh Head, the band seems to be on the right track.

Being submerged in the music scene and a part of its evolving nature for some time now, Emery has experienced many changes of seasons within their own lives and the music community they have become so prominent in. When asked about their hardest moment as a band, Morrell stated, "We've been pretty fortunate and blessed and (have) not really gone though a lot of bad stuff. I mean, we're, like, all best friends and so we really are able to communicate really well… But yeah, we've had difficult times when a couple members have left the band… But, for whatever reason whether we agree with it or not, we were in some form, able to talk it out and we're still great friends with those guys." This attests to the core value of the bond of friendship amongst the group. Those bumps didn't stop the band from moving forward and continuing to make music.

Upon further elaboration on their journey over the past ten years, Carter voiced what attributes of the band he feels has brought them thus far: "I think, probably, maybe ignorance. We won't stop or something. I think, what got to make us a different band to begin with was maybe the fact that Devin and Toby – what they do vocally is really unique. They sing well together and their melodies are always really interesting." On the broader evaluation of how the music community has changed since they started back in 2000, he stated:
"I would say it's just less
of a scene as far as a certain *thing* and a certain *place* and certain *people*. It's just everything, everywhere, which has got some really good qualities to it. But it's a lot harder. Everything is very individual as far as personal taste and band sounds. Everything is all over the place, which is really cool because there is so much choice out there; but it's a little much for me to be able to feel like I know what's going on."

Head, agreeably, chimed in: "…like internet – you're able to get your music out there, it just becomes easy to be a band, but also kind of dilutes everything so it's really hard, I think, for someone to keep up with or even as a listener, to know what even a band is or if there is a new genre … But it is cool, because, yeah, any band that has a computer can record a song and put it out all over the world, so it really is a unique time, I think, in music – but hard to be a band. Now it's more that you're just giving your music away almost. It's so hard to get someone to commit actual dollars to the band, so some bands are going away while other bands are coming up in the same scene … it's cool though."

Part of the distinction between bands is the creative process when making a new album. A key part of that formula is the way in which lyrics find themselves intertwined with the musical riffs, breakdowns and beats. Shelton described the method he and Morrell follow. "Basically, we just write our music – usually first – and then I usually have a phrase or a catchy lyric that I try and kind of write around it. And I think, a lot of times, it kind of develops into an idea or I have an idea from the start and I just kind of go from there." With lyrics saturated with relatable anecdotes, life circumstances and emotional breakdowns, the guys of Emery have heard
countless amounts of
testimonies on the impact their music has had at bringing people through some rough times. Morrell recalled one story in particular: "Craziest one was we actually played a show, our bus broke down and Devin and I played just acoustically… And a girl in the audience said she got into a car wreck I believe … and she was in a coma ... and she was telling us that her friend kept coming by and there was, like, no response. She didn't move, she didn't do anything and her friend knew that her favorite song of ours was 'Fractions' and she played it and she would actually smile when that song came on. She was in a coma for, I believe, it was almost two weeks. And they thought maybe the worst and she actually smiled (and) then she came out of it. I was, like, 'Wow, I can't believe we wrote a song, which, you know, in the whole scheme of things is just a song ... but it meant something, like, even subconsciously to somebody.' I can't even believe God would use our music like that. I think it gave her family and friends some encouragement that she was still there."

After finishing up with a reminder to look for their new album and tour coming in the fall, the guys retreated to practice and prepare for their upcoming set. A few hours later Emery took the stage and the crowd went wild in excitement. As soon as the first scream ripped through Head's microphone, the energy was uncontainable. With songs like "The Party Song" and "Walls," the crowd sang along to every word making for a staple performance in the launching year of the Forty Fest.

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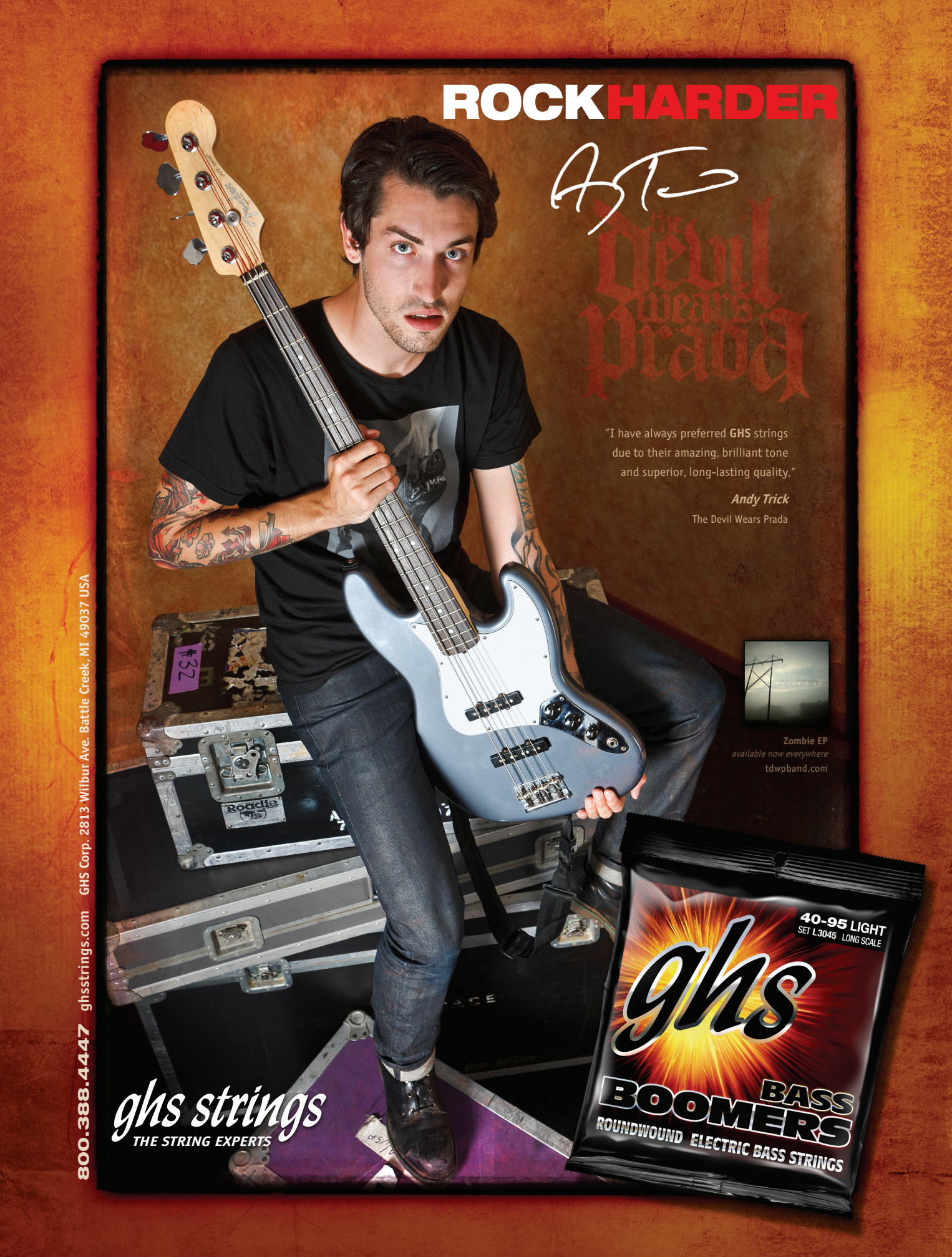
EMERY

*Photo: Jim Layton

FEATURE & PHOTOS BY MEGAN GRAHAM*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AUGUST BURNS RED

Photo: Cristian Domingues [CristianDomingues.com]

WHEN IT COMES TO RELEASING NEW MATERIAL, AUGUST BURNS RED'S TOP PRIORITY HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO CREATE SOMETHING THEY'RE PROUD OF. SO FAR, THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS HAVE GIVEN THEM PLENTY TO BOAST ABOUT. WITH COMBINED ALBUM SALES RECENTLY HITTING A QUARTER OF A MILLION, A FANBASE ALL ACROSS THE WORLD, NEW MATERIAL CIRCULATING BEHIND THE SCENES AND A CO-HEADLINING SLOT ON TOUR THIS FALL WITH BRING ME THE HORIZON, ONE WOULD ASSUME A BAND OF THEIR STATURE WOULDN'T HAVE TIME FOR MUCH ELSE. IN REALITY, THE FIVE-PIECE FROM PENNSYLVANIA HAS BEEN RECORDING *HOME*, A LIVE DVD AND CD AS WELL AS A BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT WHAT IT'S REALLY LIKE OUT ON THE ROAD.

One week after their sophomore release *Messengers* hit stores, the band started to realize their dreams of becoming rock stars was, in fact, attainable and their 2009 album *Constellations* made it evident to everyone else that August Burns Red deserved every bit of their success. The impact of their achievements fully hit them when they realized that what was once just a band had now become a full-time job and essentially their lives. Instead of planning a touring schedule around events in their personal lives, they were now finding themselves on the road for weeks on end and hardly ever getting an opportunity to go home. In support of their acclaimed albums, they have been extensively touring all over the U.S. and Europe and just recently made their way back to South America for the first time since 2008.

For August Burns Red, playing a show in South America is much different from their average U.S. tour date. The band is heavily guarded with security on their walks to and from stage, as opposed to casual walk-ons from the back; and between each show a plane ride replaces endless hours on a tour bus. Not only that, but the kids in South America go wild over ABR. Chanting, screaming along with vocalist Jake Luhrs and intense circle pits are common factors at each show. Perhaps because the fans in South America have long awaited a chance to see them live or maybe because intense heartfelt metal performances, like those from August Burns Red, are few and far between.

Before their most recent venture down South the band had one thing on their mind – releasing a DVD. *Home* is the highly anticipated live DVD/CD combo that came out September 28th. With previous albums attaining the level of success they did, the band felt it was time to release a cohesive, live account of what they are all about and where they stand now. Documented on the DVD is everything from a live hometown performance to the band's travels across five different continents, everywhere but home. Lead guitarist JB Brubaker speaks for the entire band when he explains how proud they are of their latest project. To see all their time away from loved ones and hard work out on the road as a collective piece of work like that is something that is irreplaceable to them. Although it seemed as if they would be on the road forever, their hometown of Manheim, Pennsylvania got a heavy dose of August Burns Red back in June when the band performed to a sold-out crowd of over twelve hundred people. This hometown show marked a first for ABR since becoming metal icons. Fans from Pennsylvania, California, Texas and even Amsterdam drove across state and international lines and gathered outside hours before the show to ensure their spot in the front. When the band discovered how far some fans traveled to be at the show they were incredibly humbled and it gave them all the more reason to put on

TRACK-BY-TRACK COMMENTARY ON *HOME* *by Jake Luhrs*

Intro – JB actually wrote this at home one day and thought it would make a good intro, so he went to our friend Carson Slovak's studio (atriumaudiopa.com) and recorded it to use as the set intro on *Home*.

Back Burner – This song is a great opener, it has a lot of energy and hits hard. JB actually wrote the lyrics for this song and I have to admit, I love screaming them. Powerful song.

White Washed – Seems to be a big hit with the fans. I love playing this song, because I really enjoy the guitar work – JB and Brent really accompany each other on this track.

Your Little Suburbia is in Ruins – This is the first song I ever rehearsed with ABR. It's one of my all-time favorites. I'm kinda bummed I didn't record it! Ha!

The Eleventh Hour – Matt wrote the lyrics to this song, and it was the first song I ever recorded with ABR. This is heaven for people who like breakdowns!

Meddler – Is one of my favorite off *Constellations*. We have a music video out for this song and I'd say the best music video from us by far.

Truth of a Liar – This song is a pretty big hit with the fans as well. I see quite a few kids with lyrics from this song tattooed on their bodies.

Mariana's Trench – The lyrics on this track are about how America our country has basically turned our cheeks on God. He armored us and now we are using it for bad.

Thirty and Seven – Heaving-hitting song! That's all I've got to say about this one!

Existence – Pretty spiritual, very uplifting and positive. Speaking about life and how God isn't just in the church and to keep your head up.

Meridian – I played guitar for this song on the DVD, and it was the scariest thing ever! Ha. I had never played guitar live EVER and I only practiced for three days. Sketch!

Shot Below the Belt – I really like the rhythm in the beginning of this track. It just pumps me up and the structure of this track flows well if you ask me. I love this song!

Up Against the Ropes – Is about my parents getting a divorce and my father saying he couldn't forgive himself. It holds a dear place in my heart. My father is a great man. Love ya, Dad!

a memorable performance. Since the setlist was full of old and new favorites the crowd was especially responsive and it gave the band an opportunity to see how their music directly impacts their biggest fans. This unforgettable concert, as well as a glimpse of the touring life and testimonials from fans, is featured on the new DVD and includes performances of fan favorites like "Composure," "Backburner," "Up Against the Ropes" and "Meddler."

Not only has the band been busy working on their debut DVD but guitarist and lead songwriter JB Brubaker has been writing new material while they've been out on the road. The constant change of scenery and nightly encounters with fans offers him endless inspiration and, since the band is constantly on tour, finding studio time to write isn't always the easiest of tasks. Fortunately for us though, August Burns Red has set aside plenty of time after their fall run to get back into the studio. With all the success of their previous three full-lengths, the pressure is on to deliver material that will exceed past songs and stand out amongst a slew of hardcore acts. When asked about the pressure, JB replies, "I honestly don't really feel much pressure. I mean, I don't know… I know it's there and all, but I try not to let it consume me, 'cause when the pressure is overwhelming, it's hard to write anything at all. We have always tried to make music we ourselves love, 'cause if we don't like it and wanna listen to it then why would anyone else?" This mindset is what drives Brubaker to continually write music that will excite their fans and push the limits of the metal genre today.

With *Home* released and a new album in the works, the only thing left on August Burns Red's agenda is to tour. Luckily, they do that very well. This fall they'll be co-headlining the *AP Tour*, which will be ABR's first headlining U.S. run since releasing *Constellations*, with their friends and previous European tourmates Bring Me the Horizon. "We're so excited to be back on the road in America, especially with Bring Me the Horizon, because they're our buds and it's sure to be a good time," says Brubaker. Constantly being on the road is a frequently discussed topic in the new DVD being that much of it was filmed while on tour across the world. When asked about life on the road JB replies, "I love it, but there are lots of ups and downs … I hope our fans realize it's not always easy being shoulder to shoulder with the same group of people for, you know, seven or eight weeks at a time, but it's a part of the job. Thankfully we're really blessed, because we're all best friends and we know what works for who and what doesn't work for who, and to seriously have that understanding is really important in a band. I just want our fans to know it's not always easy, you know? But it is always worth it."

✖

ABR

BY BRITTANY CARTER

Composure – Probably ABR's pride and glory. This track is our baby! We love this song and what it stands for – unity, love, passion and strength. These things sum up what ABR is.

The Seventh Trumpet – The end of the world. The end of our set, the last time we will ever play that song was that night. The night we recorded our DVD in our little home of Manheim, PA.

The DVD *Home* is a great documentary on who we are and what it's like to be in the shoes of August Burns Red. It's bittersweet at times, but a true blessing from God. I thank Him everyday for what He has blessed me with. All of my bandmates, all of the fans, all of the amazing places and having Him with me through all of this has and will always be an amazing season that will never be forgotten. God bless.

WITH *Ø (DISAMBIGUATION)* **UNDEROATH** SEEMS TO COLLECTIVELY BE IN THAT "HUNGRY" AND "OUT TO PROVE SOMETHING" MINDSET THAT USUALLY PRODUCES GREAT MUSIC AND EVEN GREATER LIVE SHOWS. "WE HAVE JUST MADE WHAT WE THINK IS OUR BEST ALBUM," STATES GUITARIST TIM MCTAGUE IN A MATTER-OF-FACT AND I-AM-NOT-JUST-SAYING-THIS TONE. "SOME PEOPLE WOULD SAY THAT WE'VE LOST OUR MOST IMPORTANT MEMBER," HE GOES ON, REVEALING A SLIGHT CHIP ON HIS SHOULDER –

MOST ASSUREDLY BECAUSE HE'S HEARD SOME PEOPLE SUGGEST EXACTLY THAT – "BECAUSE OF THE VISUAL IMAGE OF THE BAND. FOR SOME PEOPLE THAT ARE CONCERNED WITH THAT," HE MUSES, AS IF TO IMPLY THAT IT'S PETTY, SUPERFICIAL AND OFF-THE-MARK TO JUDGE A BAND BY ITS IMAGE. "THEY MIGHT BE THINKING THAT. WE THINK IT'S FITTING THAT, WITH THIS NEW ALBUM, WE WILL PROVE THAT UNDEROATH IS MORE THAN JUST ANY ONE MEMBER."

BY DOUG VAN PELT

Photo: Travis Shinn

Ahhh, the team concept... Underoath seem to be rallying around this theme right about now. The vibe I picked up from McTague and vocalist Spencer Chamberlain was one part defensive, one part being stoked about the new album's sonics and songs and one part "Underoath vs. the world," which are all factors that should serve them well. The wheels didn't fall off the UO bus when lead vocalist Dallas Taylor left in 2002, nor when the band quit *Warped Tour* midway through the traveling show back in '06, and this personnel change shouldn't be catastrophic for the six-member group, either.

While the drama around the band is partly built on guesswork, rumors and innuendo, there's no denying that the departure of Aaron Gillespie leaves a big hole to fill. His fiery red hair and boyish good looks were one thing, his personality and skills as one of the upfront speakers with a mic in a live situation was another, as were his fluid "clean" vocals (and don't forget his mad drumming skills). There won't be another article on Underoath in the next 12 months that doesn't involve at least some details of his departure. Like the *Warped Tour* drama of '06 (with people wondering if the anti-Christian heckling from "Fat Mike" of NOFX had anything to do with their canceling of the remaining tour dates).

There's nothing like cutting to the chase, so I asked the obvious "why" question concerning the split with Aaron. "Bas-ic-ally," Chamberlain replies, drawing the word out as if extending the syllables gave him more time to think of an adequate answer… "I'm trying to figure out the best way without sounding like a jerk or anything. Basically a lot of things went down in Europe, as far as just friendship-wise with people. I think there's a lot of things he pointed out just as a friend… After that kind of conversation on the bus he brought up the idea of thinking a lot about quitting the band. He dropped it on us right before a show. Basically, after the show it was kind of like a, 'Well, maybe I spoke too soon. Maybe I don't want to quit. I don't know.' Then we all decided it would be best if he didn't play with us anymore. 'You brought it up and then retracted it' and we were kind of like, 'We all haven't been seeing eye to eye basically at all.' We're all still friends. I talk to him. He called me up when he heard the record. There's no bad blood at all. We didn't see eye to eye. It felt like there were five guys in the band and he was kind of doing his own thing. We all decided. He kind of brought it up and then took it back. I don't think he was decided one way or the other. We decided it would be particularly best for us. We felt way better as a band and he felt way better. He was like, 'Good.' I feel good for him. He can put himself way into his solo stuff and the Almost stuff and we're way happier being true to what we want to write and playing with Daniel."

While that explanation is not likely to quench all the rumors and speculation, it sounds pretty honest.

"There's no bad blood or anything," Chamberlain continues. "He'll still text me and I'll call him every once in a while and we keep in touch. We're still friends. He's been one of my best friends since before I joined the band. For a long time he was not really into heavy music. He even talked about it when I joined the band. I kind of feel like he wanted to do The Almost and that's what he felt like he wanted to do and I think that's great. We all feel happy as well continuing on with Daniel. I don't think a lot of kids understand it. It's not like we all hated him or anything."

That's not what I heard, but then what I was hearing was coming from haters and gossip. I decided to bring it up anyway, even though I phrased it: "How much truth is there to that silly rumor?"

"That we all hate each other," the liberated frontman laughs. "We're definitely the best friends anyone could have. You have to understand, since I was 18 we've all been in a band, traveling together, we moved onto a bus. We've had life-changing things, like becoming a bigger band, having success, having family. There's been times, of course… I spend more time with them than I do my family and my girlfriend. There's time that you're in a place with someone that things get a little heated sometimes, but we're all best friends. We'd do anything for each other. I love those guys more than I could even explain to you over the phone. We all feel that way.

CHRIS DUDLEY

"...bubbly..."

JAMES SMITH

"...organized..."

DANIEL DAVISON

"...quiet..."

I think maybe some of it was changed towards the end when Aaron was in the band. You could tell that there was, like, five of us wanting to do one thing and someone else wants to do another. And that just caused tension. But I think that was all needed and we're all better in the end now than we were in the last year that he was in the band. And we're having that stress relieved and Daniel joining the band has been like nobody's bumming at all. Like everyone – the whole studio – writing stuff, we've just had a great time. We're definitely all best friends, so those rumors aren't true. I've definitely heard that about tons of bands and I've seen it in some bands, where people don't hang out and talk once they're off stage. That's definitely not us."

While obviously a bit strange (maybe even stranger than the veiled photo used for this magazine cover) the album title perfectly fits into the headspace of where the band is now. "One of us just typed in the O-slash into the dictionary online," explains Chamberlain, "and the way it comes up on a web page is the o-slash with 'Disambiguation' in parenthesis, like we have it. We were looking over it and a lot of definitions are 'to make things clear,' you know? That's kind of what we were trying to make clear with the record. It's a new Underoath. We are very confident of and proud of who we are and this band and these six members. This is what we want to make clear – that this is the direction of the band. It's a little less lyrical as far as to what type of record. There's obviously parts on the record about your life and making things clear, but it's basically more of a, 'This is who we are.' There's a lot of different definitions that could mean something different to different people. Everyone in the band at least liked one of the definitions of it, so I thought that was pretty cool."

"We feel that, without a doubt, that this is our best record that we've ever done. After being in a band for ten years this is our kind of only chance to make another somewhat first impression. We had a lot more freedom. There was things that we always wanted to, but we were never on the same page with, but now with Daniel we definitely were all on the same page. I think, for the first time ever, down to every little detail. Everyone likes their own things, but down to every color line, drum fills, vocal lines, everything. All six guys put their stamps of approval on it, which has never happened before. It was always like, 'I'm not really into it, but whatever. It works.' It's tough for six people to have all six people go, 'Yeah, man. That's exactly the way this part needs to be.'

"I think it's a big step. I feel like *Chasing Safety* to *Define...* was a huge step and progression. I feel like with this record there's that step again. We are really proud of this record and we're super excited for everyone to hear it. I think a lot of people are excited about it, but a lot of people are making judgment calls before they've even heard it. No one's heard this record except the band. Fans that are freaking out because Aaron's not in the band anymore or whatever, they don't know how we wrote songs before. I think a lot of kids are worried, but there's nothing to worry about. My advice to everyone is whether you love us or hate us or are unsure of it, listen to it before you make a judgment call. If you listen to it and hate it I have no problem with that, but we're confident that this is the best Underoath record we've ever made. Fear not, people are gonna love it, too."

–character descriptions courtesy Tim McTague

Photos: Travis Shinn

GRANT BRANDELL

"...funny..."

TIM MCTAGUE

"...loud..."

SPENCER CHAMBERLAIN

"...dreads..."

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What **Guster** Says

GUSTER IS ONE OF THOSE INDIE ROCK BANDS THAT IS STILL FAR ENOUGH UNDER THE RADAR TO BE COOL TO BE INTO. THEY'VE CHARTED HIGH ON THE BILLBOARD SALES CHARTS AND PLAYED SOME PRESTIGIOUS GIGS AND HAD SOME NIFTY TELEVISION AIRPLAY, BUT THEY COULD ALSO SIT ACROSS FROM YOU AT STARBUCKS AND TOSS CUPS AT YOUR TABLE AND NOT BE RECOGNIZED. I CONNECTED WITH MULTI-INSTRUMENTALIST RYAN MILLER (GUITAR, BASS, PIANO, BANJO, HARMONICA, UKULELE, KEYTAR, LEAD VOCALS AND BACKING VOCALS) OF THE BAND (NEARLY FOUR YEARS AGO) ON THE PHONE FOR THIS UN-USED-UNTIL-NOW INTERVIEW. ENJOY.

If you could go back in time, in a time machine, to your high school days, or sometime around that time, what thing or things would you try to change?
Well, if it's like ... is it Groundhog Day? Does it change and then I have the ability to, like, un-change it? Or how do I commit to these changes?

Well, let's, see, uh...
They're your rules man.

Let's say you have to commit to the change; but there may be, with the right amount of money, we might be able to try and experiment and erase the change.
Okay, can I be like *Back to the Future* … bet on the Super Bowl and bet on sports and stuff?

Of course.
I'd probably do some betting. I'd buy some stocks. I'd buy some IBM stocks, some Apple stocks. I'd do a little just to get my cushion and I don't know... Would I still want to be in this band and stuff? I mean, I've got a wife, so I like her a lot. I don't know. I don't want to (bleep) with anything too much. But I guess I could (bleep) with it. It's a great question, man, but I'm not going to answer it for you, though.

Okay, so when you have a blank piece of paper in front of you or it's a blank document, what gets you writing?
A lot of times it's actually music. Like going to see shows will usually do it for me. I mean, even when I saw Kiss – that totally kick-started this desire to even play music in the first place. When I saw Kiss in Dallas when I was twelve at Reunion Arena I was, like, going home, "I want a guitar, and I want to write songs, and listen to the Scorpions" and stuff when I was young. That song – "Still Loving You" – that's actually the reason I decided to start playing the guitar.

Wow!
'Cause I wanted to learn. So I think actually music inspires me more than probably anything else. Like it's not like I get in a fight with someone then I run to my guitar, like some people do.

How much do you try to hide your personal life in your songs verses just flat-out writing first person and just letting it rip?
Well, I don't tend to filter too much, you know? I don't tend to think about it either way. I don't say, "Oh, this is too … I'm exposing myself too much and I don't think ... oh, I really need to mute myself in this part." I think there's not really much of a filter that goes on. Usually it's like when I'm writing I'm not thinking about this stuff and then when it comes time to promote a record it's sort of like … or when a record's done you can sort of start to deconstruct it a little bit and see this – "Oh! This is sort of a breakup record," or "This is where I was pissed," or "This is the song about us not getting along." You know what I mean? That kind of thing. So … not something I do consciously.

Gotcha. Recording an Austin City Limits performance, how was that?
It was great. It was really fun. Like, just super professional. Getting into sort of our career path (mode) and what it is that we have achieved and what we still would like to achieve... Those sort of events, like playing at the *Austin City Limits*, are real important to us, because they're just real incredible things to do. Like, it's very professionally done and it comes out great and the other artists who do it are generally really important. They are talented people, so when we get sort of lumped into those things we get to build opportunities that end up meaning a lot to us.

Who do you think that you're connecting with? If you can describe your audience.
I don't know. I mean, our fans – at least the ones that come to shows – tend to sort of cluster around college-age kids. But, you know, that's just people that go to concerts. I know that a lot of parents of college kids like us too, but they're not necessarily in the front row, and so it's hard for me to say. I mean, we're still sort of an underground band in a lot of ways, which is funny after having been in this band for well over ten years. But we're not really a mainstream act, so it's very grassroots, very word of mouth, very organic, very DIY and the people that are sort of set up to receive those signals are generally high school and college kids, you know? There's not a lot of 48-year-old dudes, you know, going on BitTorrent or whatever. So, I tend to think ... I mean, I think our audience tends to be those people who, you know, have a lot of time and are doing their research, discovering new music. It's not necessarily on the radio or in Starbucks.

Interesting, what do you think of Jesus Christ?
Um, as a dude?

Mmm-hmm.
Uh, he's a good guy. I mean, from what I've been told.

What do you think about His claims to be "the Way, the Truth and the Life, no one comes to the Father but by Me?"
Uh, his claims? (laughs) I'll stick with that; they're indeed "claims."

Indeed. September 11, 2001. How did it change your world?
Um, I was living in New York at the time and still live in New York City, so, I don't know. It was pretty … pretty magnificent. Uh, that's probably not the best word to describe it … people will probably misinterpret it… It was pretty incredible and, um, I think it just sort of woke... Has it changed my world? I think it just sort of woke everybody up in a lot of ways to show that there was, you know, there's consequence to sort of our actions as Americans as humans and how linked and interconnected we all are. You know, things don't happen in a vacuum.

What are your goals for the next couple, two to three, four to five years?
I think we just want to keep making great records and just keep putting on good shows. And you know, there is a lot of marketing stuff that goes on the business side today. We're sort of forced into that role of business. I think my personal goal for the band is to just keep staying ambitious and remain hungry and, you know, keep working really hard to make a classic record.

What is, maybe, I don't know if typical is a good word, but what's kind of an experience you have had in creating music together as a band? What kind of instruments are being played, and how does how does the song get bounced around and fleshed out?
Well, we all in this point in our career, you know, in pitching in a lot; so, you know, a song will come up where I'm playing bass or Joe's playing bass or Adam is playing bass or whoever's playing keyboard and what guitar is being used, so a lot of ideas will come out of this record that came out from us just sitting around, switching off instruments and trying things out in our rehearsal space. You know, sometimes songs come from different places, like someone will bring in a song, a lot of it is just us in a room sort of thing.

How important is visual art to your music?
Um I don't know I wouldn't say that it's particularly important I mean you know we've tried to get our heads in getting around our light show during our concerts, 'cause it is really important as a fan. I just saw My Morning Jacket last week in New York and the lights were such a crucial part of that experience, but that's something we're sort of trying to figure out how to do better; but I wouldn't say it's a focal point at all, although it probably should be a little bit more considered.

If you had to, predict or prognosticate what do you think is going to be the next great musical movement?
Like great, like catching on into like mainstream? Or…

Yeah, I guess not so much an evaluative ... like, if you didn't necessarily like Nirvana or didn't appreciate the Beatles, but somebody that's going to sell a lot of records and get a lot of fans.
I don't know. That's sort of the million-dollar question. I mean, who knew that sort of emo and hip-hop shoots were going to be as big as they are now? But that's already kind of happened. It's the one after that that's crucial. I don't know, maybe Hank Williams will come back into style. That would be awesome. Like Kris Kristofferson and Harry Nilsson and Randy Newman … maybe all of that stuff will become cool again.

Do you think people are ready to pay attention to a singer-songwriter?
Well, there's plenty of them out there, but it just depends like, you know, it's very emotive. I don't know. I mean, somebody like Sufjan Stevens, who keeps making great records. It would be awesome if he got a little bit more notoriety, but I kind of understand why he's not … in a way. I mean, he's not incredibly accessible, but his music is very evocative and can be really profound.

What lyrics on Ganging Up on the Sun are you most proud of and why?
I really like that song, "Empire State" that's on there. I don't know why. It just sort of seems like a simple idea – not over-thought and no one really likes that song that much, so I feel as if I have to champion it whenever I can.

What is an area of questioning that you've always wanted a journalist to talk to you or ask you about?
Good question. I don't know … space. I want them to ask me about space.

So, if you had the opportunity to do some space travel why or why not would you take advantage of it?
I would totally... I think I would be like ... you know those guys in *Armageddon* and stuff, that sacrificed themselves for the good of mankind. I would be like Bruce Willis or something. Ben Affleck would say, "I'm going to do it" and Bruce Willis would be like, "No! You have a family. I'll sacrifice myself for the good of mankind" and then he blows up the asteroid and it narrowly misses the earth.

Yeah.
I would totally do that. I would be that guy. I would be Bruce Willis.

What are some of the craziest or funniest or most oddball things you have experienced as a band or seen from the stage?
Um, I should have an answer for this... Oddball? I don't know, skip it and let me see if I can think of something.

Okay, what book or books have really turned you upside down?
I'm reading this book by Dawkins right now that are sort of informing my philosophical beliefs called *The God Delusion*. And it relates to your Jesus question. Very

"I don't know. That's sort of the million-dollar question. I mean, who knew that sort of emo and hip-hop shoots were going to be as big as they are now?"

interesting book. It should be read by everybody.

What are your thoughts on the existence of a personal God?
I think the fact that I'm reading that book probably says a lot about my personal beliefs. No, that's not necessarily true. I don't know. I'm pretty, uh ... I don't know… I'm not sure how to answer that question yet. Developing. Just say "Developing."

That's a good place to be, there's a lot to be said for progress rather then stagnation.
Absolutely.

Thought of any stories yet?
Uh… Adam cut his head open on a tampon machine.

Oh really?
Apparently.

What was he doing in a women's restroom?
I don't know. You'd have to ask him.

So, I'll ask you another time-travel question. If you could go back in time and keep any one song in the history of music from being written, which one would you choose?
That's easy! Four Non-Blondes, "What's Going On." I (bleep) hate that song.

I actually have that one on my iPod.
Uh, oh (sounding pensive). You do?

Yeah, I got it from the Singles soundtrack, I think.
Right.

I won't sing it for you.
That's cool.

I'd like to see that band cover a Heart song.
Yeah, sure. They've written together.

They have?
Linda Perry? I'm sure. I don't know. I'm just guessing. I don't spend a lot of time thinking about Linda Perry.

So, what are your plans for your next album? When are you going to be writing for that record and recording that?
I think we're touring through next summer and then we will probably start working on it the next fall, you know? Unless something crazy happening, like us becoming incredibly huge in Belgium or Indonesia or something.

(laughs) What are some pieces of advice you would give other bands to utilize the DIY concept to actually make some money?
Write good songs. It's about the songs.

How do you write a good song?
Oh, I don't know.

Alright, you mentioned a couple artists during this interview. What are some artists that have kind of woken you up or really impressed you in the last year or two?
The last year or two? I really like what's going on with My Morning Jacket, Wilco, the Shins and Sufjan Stevens and that Peter Bjorn & John record is really good. The new Albert Hammond, Jr. record is really good. I'm a fan of this woman that goes by El Perro del Mar. She had a really cool record this year. I'm trying to think of what else came out in the last couple years that is great… That's all I can think of off the top of my head.

Alright. What are some artists or music styles that you would probably say you're closed minded to; you just don't want to hear it.
Don't want to hear it? You know, blues. I don't think I'm ready for the blues, yet. Maybe that's something that will happen to me later in life, but right now I'm just having a hard time with most of the blues that I hear.

Alright, favorite and worst favorite places to play a concert in and why?
Favorite? I love … let's see, I love playing in Austin and I hate playing in Houston. It's actually true. I'm not just saying that.

Yeah, I would agree with those sentiments – living in Austin and never particularly liking Houston.
Yeah, I had a hard time in Houston.

Alright, well any last thoughts or anything you wanted to bring up or that's on your mind?
No, that was good. We covered it. There is an awesome breakfast place on Caeser Chavez. It's a Mexican place. I can't think of it right now.

Yeah, good deal. (after identifying said restaurant) Well, thanks a lot, Ryan. I appreciate you taking the time.
Alright, take care.

✖

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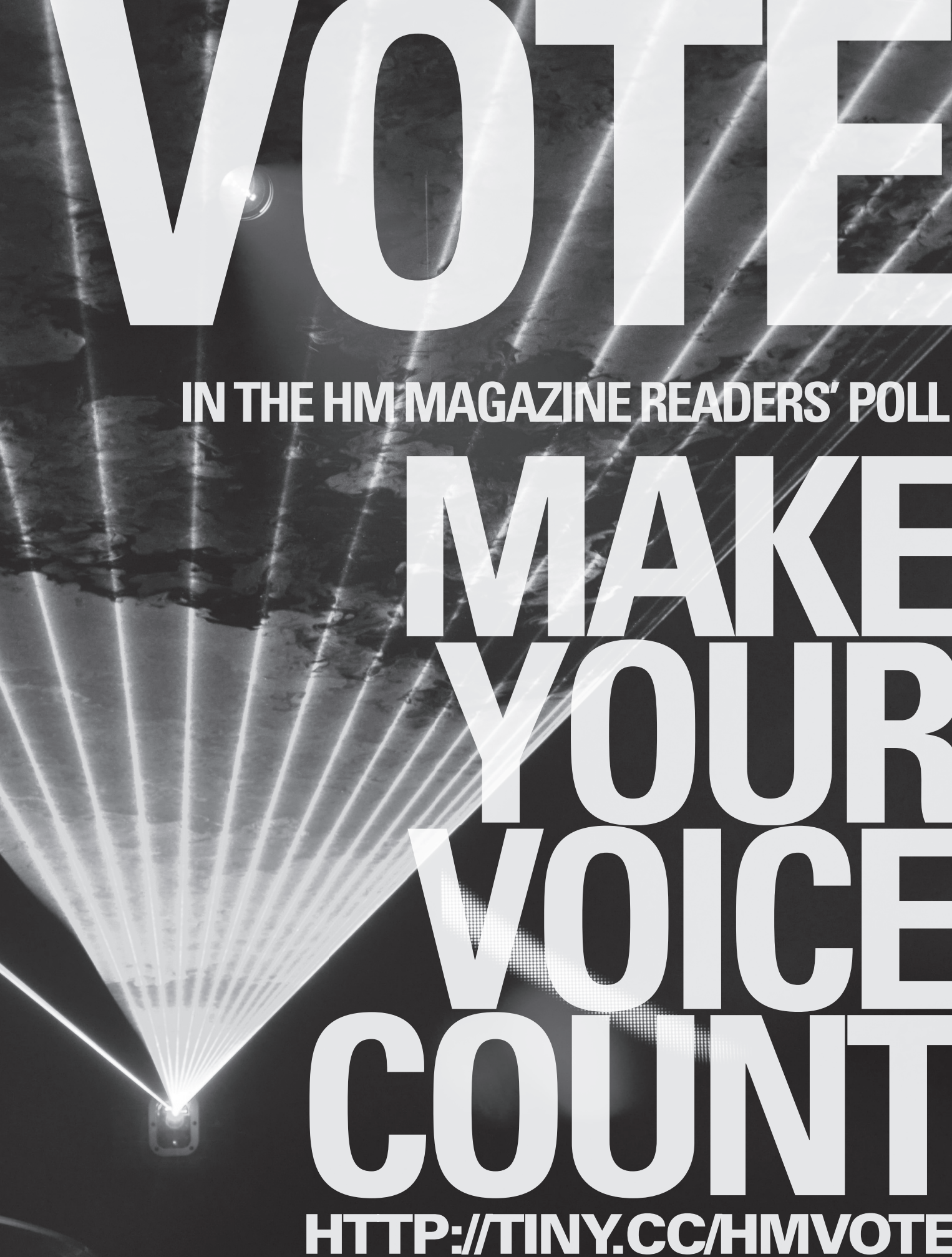
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Album reviews

45 ALBUMS 57 ENTERTAINMENT, BOOKS & GADGETS

THE CHARIOT

LONG LIVE

It is no secret that, for many, this review could contain nothing but the description "The Chariot" and it would suffice. But with a new label comes a [re]new[ed] band, and it would not be exaggerative to argue also with: improved. And if the idea of "improved" denigrates any previous effort (as these seem to be a people whose releases are without fail), may it be replaced with "above and beyond."

I would argue that this is the most dynamic release Josh Wolf and Co. have graced our ears with thus far. *Long Live* is furious and random and intricate and hyper. Song construction appeals both to that hope for the shocking vehemence that was *Everything is Alive, Everything is Breathing, Nothing is Dead and Nothing is Bleeding* (including a lyrical flashback), as well as to a more eloquent, artistic beauty than has been explored in previous discography. Tracks such as "David De La Hoz" are a perfect example, with sections so high-speed and seemingly incomprehensible (alright, just say it, it sounds like a controlled burn, or a train crash) that you feel like a heart attack, which transitions directly into a guest appearance by Dan Smith (Listener) and his poetic brilliance, back into killing things, and out via what are probably literal female angels that God sent down from heaven to glow in the room and harmonize over bells fit for a nursery rhyme.

"Robert Rios" is a different monster altogether: perhaps the closest-to-a-normally-structured track that the band has released, almost to the point of being catchy. Scogin's lyrical genius is as uplifting as ever: "The Audience" a Proverbial paraphrase of us listeners that give ear to the enticers fighting Wisdom, as she shouts in the streets, and mar her way. "The City" is perhaps The Chariot's most larger-than-life song of their career, and fully encompasses what can only be explained as an eagerness, a desperation in Scogin's voice that is expressed throughout the album in his tone: a raw shrill, a pleading [in]consistency, and doesn't seem so much "I am a vocalist and this is my style" as it does "I am bursting with new wine out of these old wineskins." Feedback into calm and back again. Structure into chaos and back again. Many a surprise that should be left to discovery. Long live The Chariot. ~~[GOOD FIGHT] LEVI MACALLISTER~~

Rating system

05 *CLASSIC*
04 *FABULOUS*
03 *SOLID*
02 *SUSPECT*
01 *AMISS*
***** *1/2*

FUTURE OF FORESTRY

ADVENT CHRISTMAS EP, VOL. 2

It's a fairly easy prediction to make that no more inventive holiday release will hit shelves both digital and physical this Christmas season than Future of Forestry's latest. The latest EP from Eric Owyoung features somber instrumentation and imaginative compositions given to holiday classics or rarities, and the results are as stunning as the memories that mark this time of year. "Joy To The World" hits its electropop early on and eventually gives way to David Crowder Band's "O Praise Him." Trust me, it works brilliantly. "The Earth Stood Still" sounds like Jon Foreman's greatest b-side. "Angels We Have Heard on High" receives an intimate bedroom treatment with a pleasant xylophone, kickdrum and acoustic working together backing male/female harmonies. Typically a holiday release is an afterthought, but anything Owyoung touches turns to sonic gold – even a Christmas EP. ~~[CREDENTIAL] MATT CONNER~~

VARIOUS ARTISTS

TEMPORARY INSANITY

Two discs and 30 songs show loud and clear what a vast and deep musical treasure the speed-to-doom metal band Deliverance has created in its long and checkered tenure. Most of the artists that pay tribute here are metal bands (Deliverance offers 3 songs on its own tribute album, albeit recent re-recordings of "Flesh and Blood" and "In U" as well as a previously unreleased "Hunger and the Thirst"), but the material covered spans both the self-titled, *Weapons* and *What A Joke* "Faster for the Master" era as well as the Bowie-esque / more epic and melodic latter era. Surprises abound and standout cuts include Grave Robber's "Awake," Stricken's take on "No Time," The Sacrificed nailing those high notes on "Slay the Wicked," Coriolis dooming out "What A Joke" and Krig's "Weapons of our Warfare." ~~[ROXX] DOUG VAN PELT~~

THE SACRIFICED

2012

Florida's The Sacrificed – now signed to Roxx – has delivered a killer sophomore release for those that love traditional metal. The old band Haven comes to mind – mixed with an early Queensryche vibe – but this is better than any of the Haven output. In fact, Eli Prinsen sings somewhere between Keven Ayers and Geoff Tate, and at times almost sounds like Jimmy Brown. For those that reveled in last year's excellent Futures End release, this will be worth checking out for sure as these guys do concept metal exceptionally well. But where Futures End only danced around spiritual issues, these guys blatantly tackle them. "I Concede" is a warm and well-crafted ballad, but, really, the songwriting quality is very high on the entire CD. Intelligent, powerful, insightful and uplifting … old-school metal never sounded so good in 2010! ~~[ROXX] JONATHAN SWANK~~

TUMBLEDOWN

EMPTY BOTTLE

I've thought of a new drinking game. No, it doesn't involve downing shots of something or bottles of beer when a frequent event happens on a television sitcom. It's a comical game of timing "how long into a new Tumbledown song before Mike Herrera references drinking?" Some of these tunes will get to the point within 7 seconds. No lie. While the first (self-titled) classic Cowbilly album from this Seattle-area bunch was full of sailors and drinking, this one follows right in line lyrically. Musically, this outfit gets down and dirty with the old stompin' blues at a punk rock pace like nobody's business. If punk rock had turf wars, the East Coast might be ruled by the Dropkick Murphys with their Celtic brand of party punk rock and we'll give the whole wild West to Tumbledown. This second release shows some gelling and a relaxed looseness in the playing, but it's not like the first one wasn't spot on musically. Call it "competent recklessness." Listen through your Johnny Cash filter and you'll see what I mean. ~~[END SOUNDS] DOUG VAN PELT~~

AUGUST BURNS RED

HOME

In the interest of full disclosure, I fully believe August Burns Red may be the greatest metal band of the decade. *Messengers* is easily one of the greatest (if not the greatest) record of the 2000s; *Constellations* was a brilliant follow-up. And in conventional fashion, once you hit a certain status level, it seems you have to put out a live album. On *Home* (so named because it was recorded in their hometown of Mannheim/Lancaster, PA), ABR is just so spot on with their playing, at certain points if no one told you, you'd think you were listening to the track on record. While that speaks volumes for the band's technical skill, I believe fans embrace the nuances of the live record: the missed note, the extended bridge, the breakdown they set up in a new way. ABR's contribution to their live record is by playing a song they've never played live before ("Meridian"). And while that's still a treat, I still want something a bit more special, something that made me feel like the "ticket" I "bought" was letting me behind the scenes for that live-only moment. But to be fair, I am only reviewing the record and this was a live DVD/CD set. Watch the DVD. ~~[SOLID STATE] DAVID STAGG~~

HOLY BLOOD

SHINING SUN

The recording process for *Shining Sun* was highly unusual; the band that finished the album was entirely different – except for the lead singer – from the band that started the album. This change has lent to a more eclectic (if that was possible) recording with some hardcore leanings and increased use of female vocals, yet *Shining Sun* still reflects Holy Blood's distinct sound. Black folk metal, medieval metal, heavy earthly instrumentation – call it what you want, *Shining Sun* is very good and Holy Blood's best release since their classic album *Waves Are Dancing*. ~~[BOMBWORKS] CHRIS BECK~~

WONROWE VISION

MISSION INVINCIBLE

For years Steve Rowe has been clueing us in to what kind of music he loves. If we hadn't known of his pre-Mortification stint with Lightforce, perhaps we could've picked it up from looking at his photos of torn-sleeved denim jackets adorned with metal band logo patches. He's been dodging the success of the *Scrolls of the Megilloth* album almost ever since its release. The dude is Steve Harris and Lemmy Kilmister rolled into one skinny, Australian frame. This solo project, which could very well be the future of this father of Christian grindcore, firmly plants his musical allegiances in the space of raw, almost-punk classic metal. Imagine Children 18:3 running through a set of Motorhead tunes … or maybe vice-versa. "The Spirit of the Rock" plods along at a biker rock pace, while the title track has a charming hook and an uptempo pace. "Vaporizer" gallops along like a lost 1980 Maiden track, while a surprise melodic gem is discovered in the spoken/sung ballad (?) "Run in Circles." An acquired vocal taste, for sure, but tunes like "The White Rock" will stay stuck in your head. ~~[SOUNDMASS] DOUG VAN PELT~~

Ratings

	DV	Writer
The Chariot *Long Live*	04	04*
Future of Forestry *Advent Christmas EP, Volume 2*	04	04
Various Artists *Temporary Insanity*	03*	
The Sacrificed *2012*	03	03*
Tumbledown *Empty Bottle*	03	
August Burns Red *Home*	04	03*
Holy Blood *Shining Sun*	03	03*
Wonrowe Vision *Mission Invincible*	03	
Times Of Grace *The Hymn of a Broken Man*	04	04
Circleslide *Echoes of the Light*	03*	02*
Mike Farris... *The Night the Cumberland Came Alive*	03*	04
Jars of Clay *The Shelter*	04	04
Sufjan Stevens *All Delighted People EP*	04	04*
Strengthen What Remains *Humanity*	03	03*
Evolett *For Your Consideration*	03	03

TIMES OF GRACE

THE HYMN OF A BROKEN MAN

During my worst year ever – when the dust of Oklahoma caked my lungs like flour in a mixing bowl – I had one thing that kept me going, that kept me from staying in a sweat-soaked bed, collecting welfare checks or lurched over a thick-walled glass of scotch in a badly walled bar in my long-forgotten town. It was between the pages of my worn, black leather-bound book. There was the story of a down-on-his-luck bloke worse off than I – with the sorriest excuse for friends ever seen. No matter how many flies fed off my decaying skin, I knew I had it better than Job. The mayor of American Metal – Adam Dutkiewicz – and his old sidekick, Jesse Leach (KsE) must've found the same hope I cling to and grip like a desperate man, because this album reads like the title suggests. I'm no better than anyone ... just a beggar showing another man where to get bread. And these dozen psalms of varying tempo (mostly fast, with four ballads) are a feast of soon-to-be-classic American Metal. Take everything you know about Dutkiewicz' prolific production skills, everything about Leach's vocal styles ... and forget what you know. While this is entirely familiar territory for both of these guys, it's also like a Martian landscape – empty, cold and barren at times, brutal, grueling and scorching hot the next, but it offers one helluva sunset. I don't easily trust a tale of despair from a well-pressed suit and expensive shoes, but that's just me. Give me the Gospel from guys that've shuddered in the darkness and I'll listen every time. Sure, I've heard similar riffs and chant-along choruses blasted at me from AILD songs before and Leach's stoner rock vocal phrasing is recognizable from his album with Seemless, but these are simply strengths from the past being applied to a new, welcome entity. Something tells me I've found the real deal here. ~~[ROADRUNNER] THE KERN COUNTRY KID~~

CIRCLESLIDE

ECHOES OF THE LIGHT

There is much to like about Circleslide. For one thing, the band's new *Echoes of the Light* CD contains a wide variety of rock styles; nearly something for everybody. But there is one track that just sticks in the craw, and that's the single "Looking Up." Although it would be a stretch to accuse the group of outright plagiarism, this song's intro and its succeeding melody sound a whole lot like Hillsong's "This Is Our God." One suspects the band has heard the song and has been influenced by it – maybe influenced a little too much. With that said, though, there are still many highlights that make it a worthwhile purchase. Best of all is "The Litany," which has one of the coolest rock bass lines to come down the pike in a long time. And no, "Nothing Compares to You" is not that Prince-written, Sinéad O'Connor-recorded song. There is also another tenuous Irish connection to the song however, as this worship song has a whole lot of U2-y, chiming electric guitar work running through it. Another plus is that Circleslide has found a workable balance between its rocking side and its more pop side. And except for the look-alike "Looking Up," this album is mostly pretty good. ~~[SAVE THE CITY] DAN MACINTOSH~~

MIKE FARRIS AND THE CUMBERLAND SAINTS

THE NIGHT THE CUMBERLAND CAME ALIVE

The recent flooding in Nashville brought this music community together in many ways. Numerous musicians reached deep into their pocketbooks, even though a lot of them were also victims of this disaster. A portion of Mike Farris and the Cumberland Saints' CD, *The Night the Cumberland Came Alive (Healing Music for the People of Nashville)*, will be donated to flood relief efforts. It finds this rocker-turned-gospel singer doing what he does best, singing gospel music. This brief release (at only six songs in length) is also narrow in its focus. "Down On Me," for instance, expresses how victims of disasters must oftentimes feel as though the whole world's against them. However, "Dear Lazarus" uses the story of that famous biblical character as a symbol of hope. Just as Lazarus rose from the dead, so too will the Nashville community rise above the difficult circumstances created by flooding. It's not all doom and gloom, either. "Don't Let the Sun Go Down" has all the spunk of a New Orleans revival meeting. Helping out the cause is some seriously superior musicianship represented on this disc, including great players like Sam Bush and Byron House. The net result is one class act, Mike Farris, soulfully supporting a very good cause. ~~[ENTERTAINMENT ONE] DAN MACINTOSH~~

JARS OF CLAY

THE SHELTER

The Shelter is not Jars of Clay's finest musical hour. It is their most important. The dominant theme on Jars' latest is the body of Christ. The beauty of the interconnected nature of the church stands out beautifully throughout the 11 tracks. The title track is the highlight here, beginning with a slowly rotating guitar progression that hypnotizes and sets the stage for the serious subject matter. "For those who've yet to find it / the places near where love is moving," is the call from vocalist Dan Haseltine, appealing to the marginalized before reminding them in a triumphant chorus, "In the shelter of each other, we will live." Lyrically and musically, it's one of Jars' five greatest songs – an absolute songwriting success. The rest of the album supports this central song well. The opening track "Small Rebellions" bounces along with a pop structure that sounds akin to *Long Fall Back To Earth* and should become a live favorite. "Call My Name" incorporates a scaled piano that gives way to perhaps the most beautiful song on the disc. The inventive "Run In The Night" runs long at five-and-a-half minutes, taking advantage of the space to build in just the right way. Jars is already plenty accomplished as a band and they've explored a myriad of topics and themes in their 15 years. Yet the lyrical turns on *The Shelter* provide a much-needed answer for the disjointed world we inhabit. ~~[ESSENTIAL] MATT CONNER~~

SUFJAN STEVENS

ALL DELIGHTED PEOPLE EP

It has been four years since Sufjan Stevens has blessed the public with the album that many people considered the best album of the decade. A soundtrack and a few remix albums later, the indie maestro has surprised the world with the sudden release of the *All Delighted People* EP. A total of eight tracks reaching nearly 60 minutes in play time, and the wait was well worth it. Sufjan has once again reinvented the "indie" sound by moving away from stripped down to masterfully orchestrated. The title track (of which two versions exist on the EP) is a perfect example of the near symphonic collection of horns, voices and a thousand other instruments used to create rock chaos that ends in perfection. Stevens has also found a register in his voice that allows it to be so distinct that it is now almost impossible to ignore the wild melodies he conjures. What works on the EP is that Stevens never lets the songs parody themselves; what sounds out of tune or random at one moment comes back later and fits perfectly into a track. While "Enchanting Ghost" and "Heirloom" tap into Stevens' folk tendencies, "From The Mouth Of Gabriel" features Thom Yorke-style electronic backbeats and "The Owl And The Tanager" is probably the moodiest (and most beautiful) track on the EP. Each track taps all of Sufjan's talents and leaves his faults behind. All delighted people raise their hands, and mine are straight up in the air. ~~[ASTHMATIC KITTY] IAN HARVEY~~

STRENGTHEN WHAT REMAINS

HUMANITY

Strengthen What Remains brings out the best of Florida hardcore with their new record *Humanity*. It reminds me of Seventh Star's first record, *Dead End,* with a mix of In Due Time's *Back to The Basics,* along with some Red Baron. This record also has an N.I.V. feel to it. You can hear some *Flesh and Blood* influence. *Humanity* surely is helping keep Florida Spirit-filled hardcore alive and reminds me of why I love it so much. ~~[ON THE ATTACK] ROB SHAMELESS~~

EVOLETT

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

If you are a fan of Hayley Williams, the voice behind Paramore, then *For Your Consideration* is well … worth considering. With lead vocals by Haden Brightwell, the freshman release by Evolett will be a familiar-sounding treat. Power pop-rock and melodic breakdowns carry through each song. After listening through a few tracks on the album, they begin to blend together broken up only at times with the uses of voice layering and harmonizing. Overall the content throughout the album touches on relationships, and the ups-and-downs that they inevitably hold, something many probably are familiar with. ~~[END SOUND] MEGAN GRAHAM~~

ABEL
LESSER MEN

On their second release, Abel has skillfully navigated their music between the words of the deeply spiritual and artistic. *Lesser Men* channels the sound of bands like Brand New and Straylight Run, but in place of the brooding lyrics that populate much of those bands' music, Abel interjects messages of love, hope and redemption. While some of the melodies feel out of place at times, this is a strong sophomore effort from a talented band. ~~[COME&LIVE] IAN HARVEY~~

PHILMONT
THE TRANSITION EP

Philmont's latest EP, *The Transition*, received fan support before anything was even recorded via the Kickstarter.com program that allows crowdsourcing to take over a record's funding. It's a sign the Jimmy Eat World-esque rock structures and emotional delivery resonate deeply with fans of the now veteran quintet. That said, *The Transition* was money well spent. Scott Taube's vocal sounds great, rising above good-to-great melodies on tracks like "Closer" or "I Am." Lead single "You Will Remain" should become the band's next chart-topping single with its memorable refrain and the reminder that the burdens that we carry are all temporary. "If this is the last song that I sing, let it be honest, let it be true," sings Taube on the album's closing number, "Last Song I Sing." Given the band's strong rock influences and fan support, I'm sure many more songs will follow. ~~[CALIBER] MATT CONNER~~

PETER CASE
WIG!

After following his folky muse for the bulk of his solo career, Peter Case is back to rocking. *Wig!* is not especially beholden to the power pop he helped to perfect wth The Nerves and The Plimsouls, but the grittier gist of the slice-of-life vignettes he lays down here come suffused with those decades of exposure to rootsier Americana sounds. And for as much health trouble as he's been through in recent years, Case is in fine voice, with the innocence of his new-wavier days carrying a kind of ramshackle gravitas that only comes from a life hard and well lived. Though there's nothing so transparently Christian-oriented as his songwriting contribution to sacred steel ace Robert Randolph's current longplayer, the Holy Ghost remains in the machinations of Case's mini-narratives, which complement his recent book of memoirs. Lower key than an artist of his talent should rightly be, *Wig!* testifies to the talent of someone who shouldn't be underappreciated as he is. ~~[YEPROC] JAMIE LEE RAKE~~

THIRD DAY
MOVE

Third Day's *Move* includes many traits we've come to know and love most about the band. Such known pleasures begin with "Surrender," which gives a nod to the band's Southern rock roots, due mainly to an acoustic slide guitar intro. Also, "Children of God" finds the group in full-on worship music mode that celebrates mankind's special relationship with God through Christ. For guitar heroes, "Follow Me There" may be the disc's best rocker as it has a ZZ Top-like groove and mighty fine rolling bass line. Not surprisingly, even after all these years, Third Day is as evangelistic as ever. On "What Have You Got to Lose" they ask: "What have you got to lose? / Think of all you have to gain." In fact, lead singer Mac Powell opens this latest Third Day release with "Lift up Your Face," sounding a whole lot like a camp meeting preacher. In addition to the group's gospel messages for potential new believers, there are also songs that speak directly about the Christian life. Both "Everywhere You Go" and "Sound Of Your Voice" concern the desire to know God better. Strategically, *Move* opens with "Lift up Your Face" and closes with "Don't Give Up." Each of these tracks is perfectly matched to the emotions inherent in our troubled times. We should look up to God, rather than focus on our circumstances, and we should also never give up, because God will never give up on us. Once again, Third Day has made the right move. ~~[ESSENTIAL] DAN MACINTOSH~~

GLASS HAMMER
IF

What if? What if Glass Hammer got a new singer named Jon that sounded a lot like Jon Anderson of Yes and a guitar player that sounded like a cross between Steve Howe and Trevor Rabin? It sounds like a dream come true for a serious prog fan and I was extremely excited by the prospect. Glass Hammer has some serious chops and their *Inconsolable Secret* album is stunning. Whether it was these comparisons or my general excitement, I was very underwhelmed my first time through. That's not to say this isn't a great record. Glass Hammer fans will still rank it high with their other releases and it's a must for prog fans. However, what makes Yes great is the songwriting and the way all the parts gel together. You can sing along with "Roundabout," "Long Distance Runaround" and "Close To The Edge." There's really not one song you can sing along with on this one. It's clever at moments and choppy during others. New lead vocalist Jon Davison has a great-sounding voice, but the vocal lines are choppy and lack in melody. Fortunately, the prog prowess of the musicians and the neo-prog and jazz influences make the music a great listen. Try "Behold The Ziddle" and "If The Stars" for two of the best prog songs I've heard in a long time and give the album a chance to grow. ~~[ARION] DR. TONY SHORE~~

SAME AS SUNDAY
EARN YOUR STRIPES

How does a band remain as hot as Same As Sunday when their lead singer is currently in an undisclosed location halfway across the globe? Perhaps it's the "heavy pop/punk" that blends a high-energy hardcore element with a mainstream rawk-fist style that draws audiences coast-to-coast despite the band's independent status. It's a rare mix to say the least. While singer Chris Bauchle serves time overseas for his Air Force Reserve commitment, the band continues to promote *Earn Your Stripes*, their latest 7-song EP that delivers raucous Celtic punk energy with blistering riffs and memorable choruses. "There's nothing we do better than this," shouts the band on the opening track, "Roads," and by the end you believe them. "Exits and Entrances" impresses with its guitar work, and the title track melds the band's influences perfectly in a high-dosage closer that will have you going right back to the beginning. ~~[THE GOOD FIGHT AGENCY] MATT CONNER~~

Ratings

	DV	Writer
Abel *Lesser Men*	03	03*
Philmont *The Transition EP*	03	03
Peter Case *Wig!*	04	04
Third Day *Move*	03*	04
Glass Hammer *If*	03	03
Same As Sunday *Earn Your Stripes*	03	04
Vision *Mountain in the Sky & S/T*	03	
The Rex Carroll Band *That Was Then, This Is Now*	03*	
Ted Kirkpatrick *In the Shadow of the Masters*	03	
39 Stripes *Beyond Broken*	03	02
Clear Convictions *The Mystery of Iniquity*	03	02
Husband + Wife *Proud Flesh*	03	04
Blissed *Death is Not the End*	02*	
Ember *Embrace*	02*	02
Press Play *NY2LA*	03	03*

VISION
MOUNTAIN IN THE SKY & S/T

This band of melodic Southern rockers surprised a lot of folks in the mid '80s with a progressive, mainstream sound that was passionate and rocking. Imagine Kansas prog rock (thanks to the fiddle playing of Leonard Jones) and the songwriting hooks of .38 Special and Pat Travers Band (mostly thanks to the smooth and powerful vocals of frontman Rocco Marshall). That's the kind of world class quality found in Vision. And don't forget that two of their members on the first album were survivors of the Lynyrd Skynyrd plane crash – bassist Leon Wilkeson and pianist Billy Powell. (Note: both of these albums were self-titled, but the originally self-released one was renamed here after the lead-off track, "Mountain in the Sky"). *Mountain...* sounds the better of these two, thanks to the songs that didn't get re-recorded for the next one (the title track, "Fight the Good Fight," "Coming Soon" and "Standing in the Light"). These tunes and the re-recorded "Lord is my Joy" are indicative of the new believers' unbridled and raw joy. These should be on any serious rocker's radar. [BORN TWICE] DOUG VAN PELT

THE REX CARROLL BAND
THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW

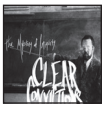
Like the famous SE Hinton novel that shares its name, this album has the necessary attitude in its vocal and guitar riffs that set it apart. This is by far the best post-Whitecross album on Rex Carroll's musical resume. Where King James found a metal band faltering slightly with (perhaps) average vocals, these songs stand strong with good hooks and the tasty vocals by Carroll himself (who knew?). With blues, it's all feeling and groove. Thankfully, these songs have both. And, since one can't imagine a Rex Carroll album without a spotlight solo, enter "Foolsgold," which acts as an intro to "Working Man's Blues." The standout track might be the laid-back "Rock My World," which would've fit nicely on any Allman Bros album, and the guitar singing like a bird at the end of "My Train." [RETROACTIVE] DOUG VAN PELT

TED KIRKPATRICK
IN THE SHADOW OF THE MASTERS

In the spirit of previous drum solos over harpsichords a la "K517" (from *Vanishing Lessons*) Kirkpatrick nails down nine lengthy yet speedy drum runs to the tune of musical virtuosos like Paganini, Beethoven, Mozart, Bach, Mozart, etc. The "wow" factor is hit a couple times when Kirkpatrick charges out of the shadows, instead of just playing accompaniment percussion for the symphony, but never does the playing slip below the impressive level. [PATHOGENIC] DOUG VAN PELT

39 STRIPES
BEYOND BROKEN

Another independent rock band trying to make waves on a national level is the Tampa-area rock band, 39 Stripes, with their latest release, *Beyond Broken*. They've experienced decent success thus far with consistent touring, a place on Petra's *Farewell Tour* a few years back and several endorsements and festival credits. Unfortunately, it won't be this collection of songs that take them to the next level. *Beyond Broken* is largely a collection of tired alternative rock tracks that won't stand out when placed alongside any decent level of competition. Lead single "Mustard Seed" (yeah, it's that obvious) includes cringe-inducing lines like "I don't have to be a super hero" and references to Ground Zero to make it rhyme. The title track references every Christian rock ballad cliché of the last 10 years (including the title, once again). Overall, it's not horrible. It's definitely not good either. [HOLLAR] MATT CONNER



CLEAR CONVICTIONS
THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY

Clear Convictions tries to make a comeback from their 2005 release on Strike First, but fail to do so. They kill the mood by having some guy preaching for over three minutes. They should have them as interludes the same way For Today did on *Breaker*. *The Mystery Of Iniquity* has some pretty cool parts, but as a record on a whole I would just buy it on iTunes or Amazon. This record is a real letdown to a great band. I think with the lineup changes it just fails to keep up with what I remember from five years ago. [ON THE ATTACK] ROB SHAMELESS

HUSBAND + WIFE
PROUD FLESH

It doesn't take long to be drawn into the evolved sound of Husband&Wife on their latest release *Proud Flesh*. These four indie folksters use an array of instruments that add that extra hint of splendid creativity refreshing to find on an album. Incorporating echoing hollowed voices then turned-up tempos on the chorus, often finishing with mood-inducing breakdowns. These guys are switching gears ever so slightly from their last album *Dark Dark Woods*, which is filled with melancholy, moseying-through-the-rain-and-loving-it kind of tunes. *Proud Flesh*, with its self-titled song featuring guitar-plucking pickups and driving drums, follows this theme throughout the album, permitting the guys to bump up their sound to a new level, leaving one wanting more. [CROSSROADS OF AMERICA] MEGAN GRAHAM

BLISSED
DEATH IS NOT THE END

With almost knee-length curly hair, frontman David Pearson is almost an easy target for scene kids. But when you look at Blissed's mohawk-sporting guitarist and the band's resume, it's hard to ignore their road pedigree and stick-to-it-iveness. With the vocals at times sounding like a weathered melodic Larry Worley (Fear Not, Love Life) that are backed by loud gang chants, the sound borders on melodic old-school hard rock and modern Southern metal. The differences are sometimes so vast that a prognosis of schizophrenia wouldn't be inappropriate. They're good at either extreme – even when they swing from one end to the other in one song ("Kiss for the Pain") – but they're flat-out great at the Southern groove metal in "Come & Take It." [WOUNDED] DOUG VAN PELT

EMBER
EMBRACE

As immediate as the first Ember song from *Embrace* one could pick up hints of other bands – Kutless, Three Doors Down, Nickelback. The album stays within a well-populated genre. The voices and instrumental compositions blend well with their relatable lyrical style. There is an undeniable talent amongst this well-versed group of musicians. Once past the first song, that seems to be repetitive lyrically, the fourth track, "On My Own," brings a little redemption with a much stronger content. The guitar breakdown at the end is a bonus as well. Finishing up with the last song on the album, the title track wraps up the message of the album nicely; Love, hope and God's never-fading presence in any and every situation. [VSR] MEGAN GRAHAM

PRESS PLAY
NY2LA

Ready to get your dance on? Press Play furnishes their new album with just the kind of beats to start any dance party as well as a heartfelt time of worship. The band's mission is to reach a wide range of listeners (from NY to LA) and make a difference in people's lives and communities. *NY2LA* starts out with high-energy beats and fast-paced rhythms then winds down with worship ballads such as "My Everything" and "Forever," which are led by an array of nicely harmonized vocals. *NY2LA* is a fun album that mixes things up. [DREAM] MEGAN GRAHAM

The Christian & Art

WITH KEMPER CRABB

The Disconnect: Why Evangelicals Make Bad Art (Part the Twenty-Fifth)

We've been exploring in these articles the question of why it is that millions of Evangelicals in America have produced so little quality art of any sort, and have seen that this is largely due to limited (and/or distorted) views of biblical teaching (or a failure to act on the implications of these teachings), despite the fact that Scripture equips Christians for "every good work" (2 Tim. 3: 16-17), one of which is creating art.

We examined the damaging effects of deficient theology on the doctrines of Creation and Eschatology, effects which produce devaluations of matter and time as apropos theaters of God's Glory, resulting in pessimism about history, and in viewing the world as effectively belonging to Satan, as only something to be escaped from.

Non-Biblical ideas concerning the Holy Trinity lead to a picture of mankind as simplistic machines rather than the bearers of God's Image, as well as to the destruction of symbol as showing both multiple and unified at the same time.

We turned then to an examination of the Incarnation of Christ, in Which God joined Himself to Humanity in the God-Man Jesus, "at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood; truly God and truly Man" (Council of Chalcedon, A.D. 451), and saw that many Evangelicals hold a view of the Incarnation which sees Jesus' Humanity as only peripheral to His Divinity, and ignore His Humanity, denigrating the human as a legitimate sphere of spirituality.

In the last article, we saw how this aberrant view of the Incarnation can lead to devaluation of the fact of Christ's Growth and Human Development, which in turn discounts the valuation of regular human growth in time as unimportant to God's Purposes, so that men are seen in a deformed fashion.

The devaluation of Christ's Humanity is artistically destructive in other ways, as well. For instance, an improper view of the Lord Jesus' Emotions (intrinsic as they are to His Humanity) leads to an improper view of the value of human emotion, and thus to a deformed representation of men in worship and art.

It is frequently assumed that the only "spiritual" emotion for Christians to experience or display (especially in worship) is happiness. As a result, songs (and other artistic expressions), especially worship songs, generally seek to urge listeners/worshippers to a state of happiness or manifestations of joy, and other emotional states or expressions are ignored or are considered improper for life and worship.

Yet God's Word reveals the Incarnate Lord as experiencing a full range of human emotions: Jesus was joyful, yes (John 17:13), but He also exhibited anger (Mark 3:5), and compassion (Matt. 9:36; 15:32; Luke 10:33), and wept (John 11:35) and was sorrowful (Isaiah 53:54; Matt. 26:37-38; Mark 14:34).

These cannot have been sinful, because Scripture explicitly tells us that Jesus never sinned, emotionally or otherwise (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Peter 2: 21-22; 1 John 3: 4-5). Since Christ did not sin in experiencing these Emotions, it is obvious that simply experiencing them does not, in itself, constitute sin (though they may, any of them, flow from sins). Rather, we see that this range of emotions are appropriate to human existence in the world, and all of them (as they were with Christ) are suitable for spiritual expression and experience (even worship).

This should not surprise us, since the Psalms, which served as the worship-songbook for ancient Israel (and thus for the Sinless Lord Jesus), express the full range of human emotion, intended for use in worship, such as regret (Ps. 51), indignation (Ps. 2, 7), sorrow (Ps. 12, 137), steadfast trust (Ps. 16, 23), adoration (Ps. 148, 150), and so forth. These songs are still to be used in Christian worship today (Eph. 5: 18-19) and should serve as models for our worship songs today.

Paul instructs us that we are to be imitators of God (Eph. 5: 1), and of Paul's imitation of Christ (1 Cor. 11:1). God has acted in Christ to save us, showing us how to live as humans who serve God even in the full spectrum of human emotion, and we must take that Expressed Image of God in Christ (Hebrews 1:3) and imitate Him in our worship, our art, and in all we do, in light of Christ's Full Humanity and Divinity.

[kempercrabb.net]

Guest editorial by Josh Scogin

"What advice would you give a young band trying to get started in this day and age?"

In my previous article, I said, "forget about the money and focus on the music." Well, in this article I would like to entertain the idea of spending your money. Let me explain. In the beginning stages of any band you need start-up money. Merchandise, equipment, possibly a place to practice, a quality recording, transportation and gas are just a few of the essentials. Since there is no such thing as a "band fund" at this point in the game, these items are usually lackluster at best and in many cases are completely nonexistent. It is always the same dilemma. Since the band doesn't have any money, they can't buy the necessary items to sell at shows to generate any income. Unless you are one of the select few bands with a member whose rich parents are willing to purchase all the start-up items, then you understand the struggle in some form or fashion. I am familiar with this frustration, but I also think people could take advantage of this stage in the process. Imagine if you would, five band members, all with jobs, each week designating a certain amount to contribute to your "band fund." Before long the band will be able to purchase everything it needs and it can actually be quality stuff that will (in theory) stand up to the standards of well-seasoned bands. I know that I probably lost most of the readers when I mentioned having to keep a "real job," but I guess it all really boils down to how bad you want your band to succeed. Acting on this advice doesn't guarantee "success." It is only one method (of many) to hopefully speed up the process of getting a sustainable band fund that can continually generate money. Of course, I am an idealist and far too often the reality is, "easier said, than done." The way it usually pans out is that either only 2 or 3 dudes actually keep their jobs and then don't want to spend their money if others aren't also willing or certain members don't want to sacrifice too much for fear of the band fizzling out and everything being in vain. Unfortunately, it does take five to tango, but if this strategy is placed in the right hands of the right people who are determined to make it work, it can be a real catalyst to helping you reach your goals in less time. Lest we forget, the music must come first. If no one desires the music, then no strategy, great or small, can be of any help. So be wise, learn from mistakes, roll with the punches, look toward the future, but enjoy the journey, be it big or small.

—Josh Scogin
The Chariot

Devotions with Greg Tucker

"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."
Colossians 3:17

As a first-time grandfather I am contemplating something I'd never considered in the past: getting a tattoo. Next time you see me at a festival or conference I may have "Reagan Lynn Tucker" inked somewhere on my body, testimony of an old man's love for a beautiful baby girl.

Something about a tattoo's permanence makes a statement. Unlike wearing a t-shirt or carrying a banner, it says I am committed to this cause; this person forever. And here's proof.

But David Allen challenges that idea. David is one the most sought-after tattoo artists of this era (www.allentattoo.com), crisscrossing the country to satisfy wealthy clients who demand the best. Allen says, "At the end of the day, a tattoo isn't pledging your loyalty to a cause as much as to a piece of art."

I think he's on to something. I've seen a wife's name on the chest of a bad husband. I've seen a baby's picture on the arm of a bad dad. And I've certainly seen Christian messages on people who are bad Christians. Bikers call it "false-flagging" when people wear the colors of a gang they don't belong to, or otherwise do something that hints at their allegiance. People have been killed for doing so. That doesn't mean we can't or shouldn't mark ourselves with God-honoring symbols. Personally, I like them. But let's not be naïve in thinking it's a tattoo that marks us as people of faith. Martin Luther understood this when he wrote, "The maid who sweeps her kitchen is doing the will of God just as much as the monk who prays — not because she may sing a Christian hymn as she sweeps, but because God loves clean floors. The Christian shoemaker does his Christian duty not by putting little crosses on the shoes, but by making good shoes, because God is interested in good craftsmanship."

So ink up, if you're inclined. I may soon join you. But before selecting a spiritual tattoo, recognize that nothing permanently marks you as a Christ follower quite like doing every little thing with God, for God, and to the glory of God.

[Greg Tucker lives in your computer at HopeCCA.com and is president of Tucker Signature Films in Beverly Hills. You can write him at TuckerG@mac.com]

Guest editorial by Chad Johnson

The Greatest Gain

We live in a culture that prizes every variety of earthly success far above the Christian's appreciation of eternal treasure and life abundant. In reality, we can't blame modern culture for not recognizing our future glory crowns. They've doubtfully seen evidence on our part to convince them that we value a heavenly inheritance over all the sweet distractions of a world under the fallen influence.

My experience in Christian music had me all but convinced that the standards in place to measure success for a "Christian" artist were lifted straight from the pages of the secular music marketplace. I'm sure the rationale behind the measure markers was simply to share the same data on either side of the musical fence. The major tools used to gauge an artists' success or worth seem to be identical regardless of what they believe. These tools include record sales (Soundscan), venue data (Pollstar), tour history (who they've played with), online hype and the like.

I challenge you to consider your life and whether you were ever meant to compete with the world's measuring stick of success. Biblically, you will be hard-pressed to justify God-glorifying values according to the standards of our day. Don't get me wrong, I'm not hating on the CMI or my friends within it, I believe God looks at us far differently than an industry ever has. We are called to look at each other as Jesus does. He calls us to live joyfully surrendered to His will regardless of man's recognition or approval. The Apostle Paul said it this way:

Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. (1 Timothy 6: 6-11)

Regardless of how you've come to perceive success, as an artist, a student, a career worker, or anything else in life, know that God doesn't need earthly qualifications to use your life to draw many men to His glory. Trust God and lean not on your wordly understanding. Contentment in life, no matter how much or how little worth may accompany it, leads to the greatest gain. Give your life fully to Jesus and learn to trust Him no matter what!

—Chad Johnson
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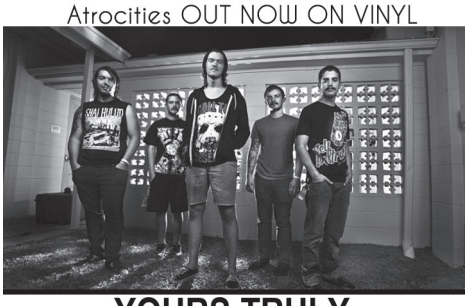

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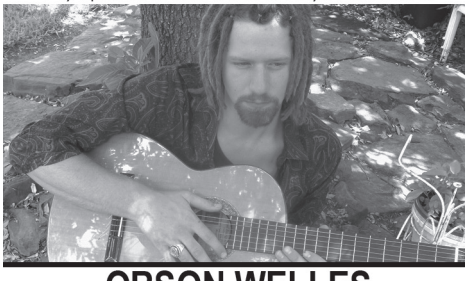

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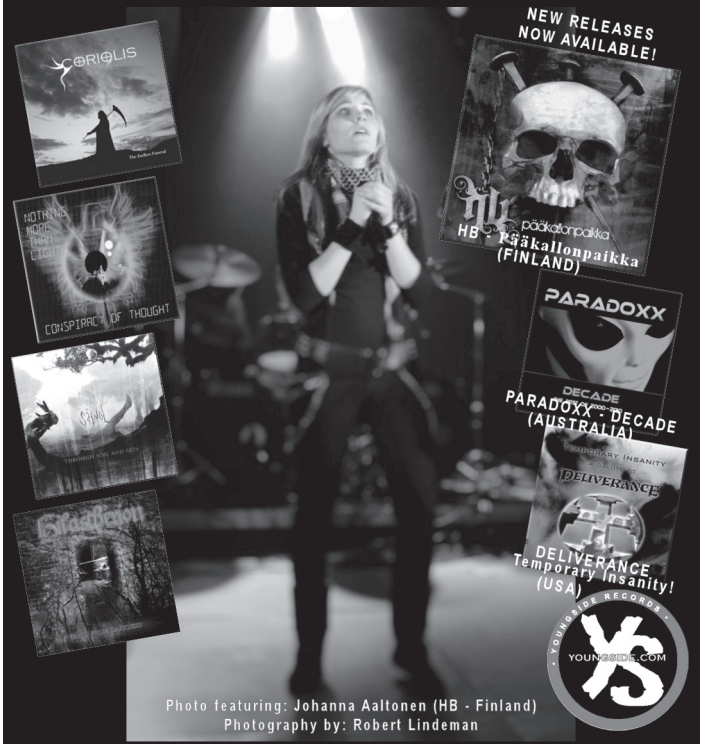

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PICK OF THE LITTER

☆ Insomniac Folklore

An amazing eclectic collection of artists from Portland, Oregon that range from 14 to 45 years old. You'll find a ton of people onstage sometimes at a live show. The band includes some offspring of Northwest Christian punk pioneers The Clergy. Dennis Childress (who has played with Flock 14 and Larry Norman) is also in the band. The instrumentation and even vocal styles are quite varied. Some accordions, violin, cello add to the mix. Imagine Bradley Hathaway and mewithoutYou in an acoustic-based sing-along folk. Now add a dose of '70s punk and Vaudeville and you'll be warm. Their 7-song coyly named *E.P.* came out in May, which was followed by the full-length *L.P.*, but nary a song was repeated on either disc. Lots to love about this band. (Doug Van Pelt)
insomniacfolklore.com

☆ Mouth of the South

With lots of friends in the metal community, this Dallas-based five-piece band has some real momentum going its way. Their new song, "Physician" on MySpace is intense and keeps up with the frenetic pace throughout the 7-songs on their *Manifestations* EP, which came out last spring.
myspace.com/mouthofthesouthmetal

Hearts in Stereo

Besides a great icon in the two hearts, this Canadian quintet cranks out some melodic pop punk with a good penchant for a vocal hook. They pull off a real funny parody of Justin Bieber in a video on their MySpace.
myspace.com/heartsinstereo

Blood And Water

This fun-loving quartet from San Francisco play quite a variety of sound. Besides melodic pop punk choruses, you'll hear some upbeat chords that hearken the days of ska, others will hook you in like a good Weezer song.
eden-records.com

☆ Come Wind

This marvelous band weaves beautiful lyrics around a soaring, atmospheric rock that mesmerizes as much as it leads to worship for the listener. Fans of Thrice will find some pulsating sonics to bond with here. Awesome.
myspace.com/comewind

Supernal Endgame

Our intern wrote on the Post-It™ note that this band sounds like it "jumped out of the '70s with its somewhat foresty/psychedelic feel" on their *Touch the Sky, Volume 1* album. Not far off the mark for this worshipful prog rock album with clean production and stellar instrumentation and vocals not unlike Neal Morse's projects.
myspace.com/supernalendgame

Tidewater

A great voice that carries the 10 tunes on *The Seas We Sail* a long way. The falsetto in the tune "Surrounded" is really exceptional.
myspace.com/tidewaterstl

☆ False Idle

Hymns of Punk Rock Praise is a fun, raw and fly-by-the-seats-of-their-pants fast-paced old-school run through "Old Rugged Cross," "It Is Well With My Soul," "Great Is Thy Faithfulness," "He Lives," "To God Be The Glory" and "He's Alive." Pretty darn cool.
falseidlepunk.com

The Redemption Center

Jesse Sprinkle threw his hat in the ring on this album (*Land of Plenty*) in a big way, drumming, playing guitar and singing a little bit, as well as producing these well-crafted 12 songs. Upbeat Americana rock goes down real smooth here.
theredemptioncenter.com

Project Damage Control

It's not often that a rock band these days delivers a straight-up classic rock / melodic metal sound that works. If The Brave had kept up their Elefante-produced pop metal craft, it might sound like this. Simple, but hot.
projectdamagecontrol.com

News From Verona

Really catchy hooks that are easy to begin singing along to. Nice piano accompaniment with the smooth vocals.
newsfromverona.com

Ashlynn

Taking its time for each note to sink in and a tension to build, this quartet from the Dallas/Ft. Worth area craft some good songs on their 5-song EP, *After the Clouds, the Sun*.
myspace.com/weareashlynn

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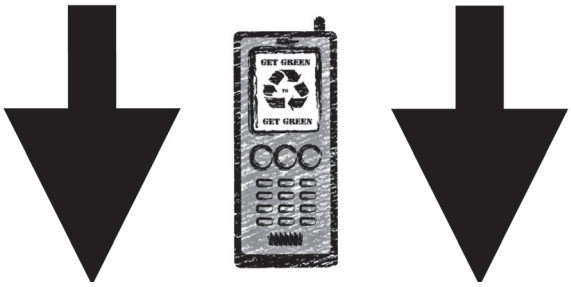

Anyone who's been reading HM Magazine in the past year knows that we've been struggling to keep our magazine in print during this stressed-out economy. When we were at this year's Cornerstone Festival, we met up with the Get Green to Get Green people and learned about how they've used material collection as a fund-raising mechanism.

So, HM Magazine is now holding a Get Green to Get Green Cell Phone Recycling Fundraising Event from November 2010 to the end of January 2011. We are collecting used cell phones, digital cameras, PDA's, MP3 players, and other handheld electronics to help erase the large business debt hanging over our heads. Every item donated will help us to meet our goal of raising $24,800 to get debt-free and stay in print.

This is both a practical solution and an environmentally-friendly one. Each year as many as 130 million cell phones are replaced. While some of these old phones are kept for emergency backup, most end up in the family junk drawer or discarded with the trash. That's about 65,000 tons of possibly toxic waste material that could end up in landfills, and that's not including the other items mentioned.

However, cell phones, digital cameras, PDAs, MP3 players, and other handheld electronics all can be refurbished, reused, or recycled. Instead of throwing them away, give them new life by recycling them for a good cause. Those items that cannot be refurbished or used for parts are recycled for their component parts according to EPA standards.

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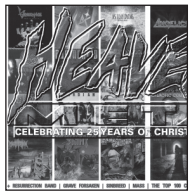

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LIFEstyle

SCOTT PILGRIM VS. THE WORLD
Campiness abounds in this hilarious flick – almost beyond common sensibilities. It's so cool / cute to see the lightning bolts emitted by his band when they play. Quotable lines and memorable scenes abound, like: "At least it'll give us something to complain about" and "Being vegan makes you better than most people," plus the scene where the Vegan Police bust in and make an arrest for breaking Vegan Law. [Universal Studios Home Entertainment] *DV*
[Cuss: 21 | Gore: 0 | Sex: 0 | Spiritual Conversations: 30]

THE LEAST AMONG YOU

On the surface Mark Young's new film, *Least Among You* may seem like your cliché story of overcoming adversity and in reality it is just that. Richard Kelly is an African American man who is wrongly accused of involvement in the 1965 Watts Riots, and in a plea bargain agrees to spend two semesters in an all-white seminary. With a once-promising career path on the rise, Richard finds himself extremely unhappy on a daily basis facing prejudice from almost everyone around him except for the janitor living in the dormitory's basement. Picture, if you will, the African American Mr. Miyagi. Predictable at times, this movie based on true accounts accurately portrays one man's quest to find his destiny while fighting off his own demons. [Lionsgate] *Brittany Carter*
[Cuss: 0 | Gore: 0 | Sex: 0 | Spiritual Conversations: 100]

AMISH GRACE
How do you react to tragedy, and the loss of loved ones? Everyone has a different way of coping and moving forward. The Lifetime film, *Amish Grace*, highlights those differences by unveiling the aftermath and reactions of the families affected by the shocking tragedy that occurred in Nickel Mines, PA on that fateful day. For those of you unfamiliar with the calamity that transpired in October of 2006, a gunman senselessly entered an Amish schoolhouse and killed five young girls before taking his own life. *Amish Grace* follows one grieving mother's struggle to forgive and testifies of the faith and compassion within this often-misunderstood community. Not only is it heartwarming and insightful into the Amish community, but one can also walk away from watching it having their faith deeply inspired. [Fox Home Entertainment] *Megan Graham*
[Cuss: 0 | Gore: 0 | Sex: 0 | Spiritual Conversations: 100]

THE DAY METALLICA CAME TO CHURCH | JOHN VAN SLOTEN

According to Canadian pastor John Van Sloten, God speaks to us through many outlets, but it's up to us to listen. Sloten is a non-conventional pastor who gives sermons on topics ranging from the latest fashions, popular movies and, you guessed it, Metallica. Although at times his congregation strayed away from his controversial teachings, Sloten has always stayed true to his vision. Perhaps the only disappointing aspect of the book is the fact that Metallica never actually attended the church. Nevertheless, "Praise the Lord, all his works are everywhere in his dominion." (Psalm 103:22). [Tate Publishing] *BC*

GUITAR HERO: WARRIORS OF ROCK
With an expandable 90+ song setlist (including Anberlin & Flyleaf), they've somehow managed to improve a fabulous game. This is the first *GH* experience I've had on the wii with its new controllers and added online dimensions. Nice. The Quest is fun, the Quickplay mode counts for stuff and the Roadie gameplay with its sabotage-the-other-players capabilities is hilarious. [activision.com] *Doug Van Pelt* [Setup Ease: A | Performance: A+ | Price: $99]

TUNEBUG SHAKE
The Tunebug "Shake" turns any bike or skateboard helmet into a speaker using sound waves. No more earbuds to worry about and it's safe, because it doesn't block out ambient sounds. It works via headphone jack or bluetooth and the sound quality is good. There's a rechargeable 5-hour battery and it mounts easily to almost any helmet. [tunebug.com] *Dr. Tony Shore* [Setup Ease: B | Performance: B | Price: $119]

XTREAMP3
Non-iPod mp3 players come and go. The shuffle is small, but sucks in so many ways. This is like a shuffle (in that you can't tell it what to play, unless you name the files in numerical or alphabetical order) without a read-out, but that is the only criticism for this lil' guy. It is amazing, because it'll function underwater – for real. A neoprene armband keeps it handy, while the waterproof connections for headphone and USB jack keep it airtight. The headphone cords are just about the right length – allowing for range of motion, but not dangling around and getting in the way, either. Snorkling is good (as it goes up to 15 feet in depth), but cliff diving would probably exceed its limits. [finisinc.com] *DV* [Setup Ease: B+ | Performance: B+ | Price: $149]

REVERB HEADPHONES
Wicked Audio makes a lot of good headphones. The sound is nice and full with that enclosed earcup isolation that really amplifies the low end. Best attribute is easily the cool, decorative earcups. [wickedheadphones.com] *DV*
[Setup Ease: A | Performance: C | Price: $29]

iMainGo 2
This portable speaker case totes your iPhone/iPod/mp3 player in a dust-free enclosed case with an clear side that allows you to see the face of the player. Loud enough to accompany a shower or working on your car, hiking or bikeriding. Nothing great, but not bad and kinda handy. [portablesoundlaboratories.com] *DV*
[Setup Ease: A | Performance: A- | Price: $39]

GRIFFIN IPHONE CASES
As mentioned in the last issue, the Griffin Threadless [1] cases are the best we've seen – soft, slim and adorned with great artwork. The Outfit Shade [2] cases look great, too, but are quite thick, adding unwanted bulk to a device designed for the pocket. It also tends to wrinkle any shield lens attached to the front. [griffintechnology.com] *DV*
[Setup Ease: A [1], A- [2] | Performance: A+ [1], A- [2] | Price: $34 [1], $29 [2]]

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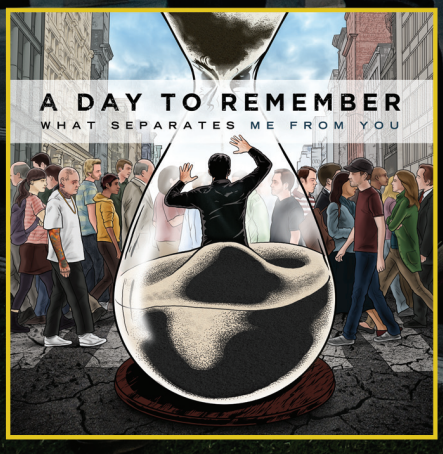

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